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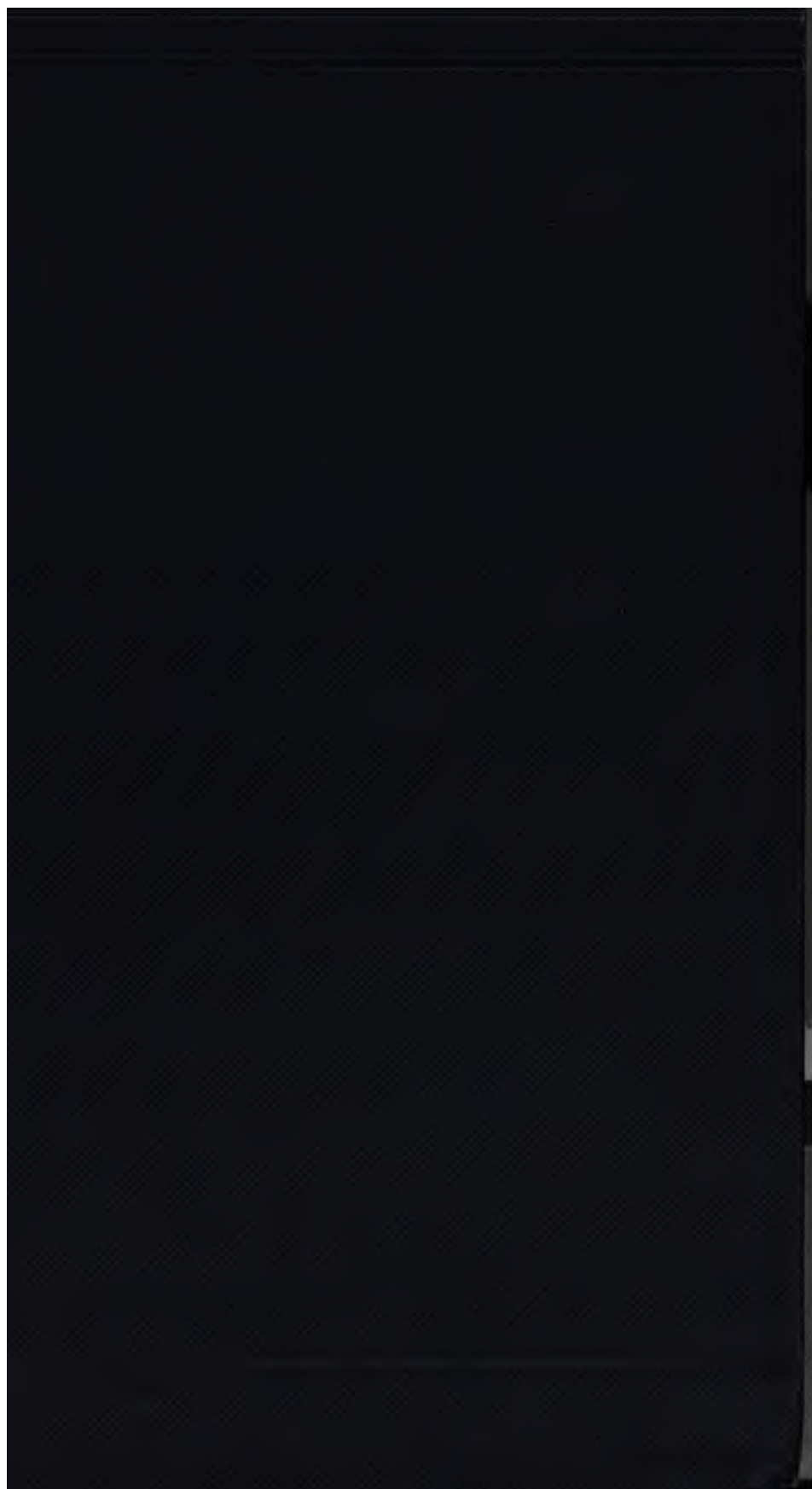
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THE AUTHORSHIP OF  
THE KINGIS QUAIR:  
A NEW CRITICISM.

PUBLISHED BY  
JAMES MACLEHOSE AND SONS, GLASGOW,  
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MDCCCXCVI.

THE AUTHORSHIP OF  
THE KINGIS QUAIR  
A NEW CRITICISM

J. T. T. BROWN.

*OMNIA EXPLORATE.*

Glasgow :  
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**INSCRIBED  
TO MY FRIEND  
GEORGE NEILSON**



Youre lytil quaier summitteth euery where  
To coreccion and beneuolence.

*The Book of Curtesy.*

Go litill tretise, nakit of eloquence,  
Causing simplese and pouertee to wit ;  
And pray the reder to haue pacience  
Of thy defaute, and to supporten it  
Of his gudnese, thy brukilnese to knytt ;  
And his tong for to reule and to stere  
That thy defautis helit may ben here.

*The Kingis Quair.*

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THE KINGIS QUAIR.

"Each rill of minute investigation swells  
the main current of criticism."

*John Addington Symonds.*

## THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE "KINGIS QUAIR."

AMONG the manuscripts bequeathed to the Bodleian Library by John Selden, there is one well known by its catalogue reference, *Arch. Seld.* B. 24. That it was written in the latter half of the fifteenth century by Scottish scribes does not admit of any doubt: on some other points, however, it preserves, like many another ancient document, a solemn silence when we would most wish to ask it questions. No colophon tells us who the compilers were, or where they dwelt; whether they made it as a private copy, for a church library, or for some rich book collector: and unfortunately there is no memorandum by Selden himself informing us when or through what channel it came into his possession. Its great interest for students of early Scottish poetry is that it contains the unique exemplar of the *Kingis Quair*.

How that poem was discovered, or rather rediscovered, in last century may be here briefly told.

In the *Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica*, published in 1748, edited by Bishop Tanner of St. Asaph, *voce* Jacobus Stuartus Primus Scotiae Rex, a poem attributed to that



king was noted as occurring in the Seldenian manuscript. Although rather infelicitously described as "a Lament made while the King was in England," the citation of the opening line—

"Heigh in the hevynnis figure circulere,"

and the explicit statement that "at the end of the poem the author highly praises Gower and Chaucer," showed plainly enough that it had been seen by the writer of the notice.<sup>1</sup>

Some years later the curiosity of at least one literary Scotsman was aroused by the announcement. Mr. William Tytler, father of Lord Woodhouselee and grandfather of Patrick Fraser Tytler, the historian, after several fruitless attempts to trace the manuscript, obtained in the end a transcript of the poem, and, having edited it, printed the complete text in 1783. The volume in which it appeared, entitled *Poetical Remains of King James the First*,<sup>2</sup> was published anonymously, but Tytler, it is well known, was the editor. In the "Historical and Critical Dissertation" the poem is unhesitatingly ascribed to James.

Tytler's decision need excite no surprise now, if only we attempt to put ourselves in his place and look at the subject from his standpoint. Like every literary man of

<sup>1</sup>Jacobus Stuartus I. rex Scotiae (Dempst. 380 : Bal. par. post 217). In fine poematis lamentatio Gowerum et Chaucerum mirifice laudat. Scripsit leges aequissimas, lib. 1 : Super uxore futura, lib. 1 : Cantilenas Scoticas, lib. 1 ; (Lamentatio facta dum in Anglia fuit rex. Pr. "Heigh in the hevyns figure circulere." MS. bibl. Bodl. Selden, Archiv. B 24). Rhythmos Latinos, lib. 1 ; De musica, lib. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Edinburgh, printed for J. and E. Balfour, 1783.

the time, he believed James the First to be entitled to high rank among the national poets, the testimony of John Major concerning the poetical talents of the king being then questioned by none. The poem, *Christ's Kirk on the Green*, was regarded by many persons—Tytler among the number—as one of the royal compositions.<sup>1</sup> But the *Kingis Quair* came with far better credentials. In the Bodleian manuscript, and in Bishop Tanner's catalogue, Tytler found James named as the author, while the theme of the poem doubtless seemed to him to agree in every particular with "the little book about the queen" mentioned by Major as having been written by James while a captive in England.

Further, it is necessary to make due allowance for the apparatus-criticus of a century ago. The critical study of early English poetry had scarcely then commenced. To have decided other than the way he did, Tytler would have required to know more than any of his contemporaries, and to have discovered for himself much that has only become known to ourselves by the combined labours of distinguished philologists and critics who have made Middle English a special study. As it was, he came very near the truth—nearer, as we shall see, than any of the subsequent editors—so near, indeed, that one may well believe he would have decided the question of the authorship differently had he been editing the poem in the light of the fuller knowledge of our day. But be that as it may, his decision was given for James,

<sup>1</sup> Its popularity is attested by Pope's couplet:

"One likes no language but the Faery Queen,  
A Scot will fight for Christ's Kirk o' the Green."

and to the present hour has been regarded as final and conclusive.

The result of a new study of the poem has led me to doubt the orthodox belief, and, in consequence, to ask for a reconsideration of the whole case. And as the doubt strikes at the conclusions of all the editors, and, not least, at those of the latest editor, it seems for that reason specially desirable, in considering the question *de novo*, to make the Scottish Text Society edition the basis of our criticism, the claim for James being therein set forth and restated by Professor Skeat with all the weight and authority of his *imprimatur*. At the same time, to ensure a fair trial, our standpoint must be that of the first editor rather than that of the latest. In other words, we must, as far as possible, view the question in all its bearings, precisely as one would require to do were the *Kingis Quair* being edited now for the first time—beginning, as it were, at the foundations, and only after comparison, information, and previous examination of all the evidence, both external and internal, attempting to reach a conclusion. This infers necessarily that salient facts will be kept in the foreground, and historical facts interpreted legitimately.

In stating the argument as it stands in my own mind, I propose to deal first with the Historical or External evidence, viz. (a) the Bodleian Manuscript, and (b) the Testimony of Historians; and, second, with the Internal evidence, viz. (a) the Dialect, (b) the Court of Love, and (c) the Autobiography in the poem.

## THE EXTERNAL EVIDENCE.

## (a) THE BODLEIAN MS.—ARCH. SELD. B. 24.

The manuscript may be described as a poetical miscellany containing poems of Chaucer, Hoccleve, Lydgate, and other known and unknown authors.<sup>1</sup> It is written on paper, and extends to 231 folios, several having ornamental borders and capitals. On folio 120, immediately following one of the poems, and written in the same hand, there occurs this memorandum: "Nativitas principis nostri Jacobi quarti anno D<sup>ni</sup> M<sup>mo</sup> iiij<sup>c</sup> lxxij<sup>o</sup> xvij die mensis marcii videlicet in festo sancti Patricii confessoris, In monasterio sancte crucis prope Edinburgh,"—a note which Professor Skeat evidently saw but hastily interpreted. He says, "On leaf 120 of the ms. the date 1472 occurs; and the date of the ms. itself is about 1475, or half a century after the date of composition of the poem."<sup>2</sup> A little care would have shown that it is only a clerk's record of the king's birthday which could not have been written before 1488, when James ascended the throne as "the Fourth."<sup>3</sup> Both 1472 and 1475 may be dismissed therefore as manifest blunders.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* note A, App. p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> *Introd. Kingis Quair*, p. xxxvii.

<sup>3</sup> On 22nd November, 1895, the Rev. W. D. Macray, of the Bodleian Library, kindly sent me a copy of the memorandum, pointing out at the same time that it had "wrongly been assumed to be the actual date of the ms., whereas it must have been written after the accession of James as 'IV.'" The transcript of the ms. printed in the Appendix, I obtained on 12th December. I subsequently discovered that Dr. David Laing had noted and printed the memorandum. *Vide Bann. Miscel.*, Vol. II., p. 161.

The *Kingis Quair* begins on folio 191 and ends on 211. Two scribes have been at the copying of it, the one completing the first 178 stanzas, the other the concluding 19 stanzas. The memorandum unquestionably establishes 1488 as the earliest possible date of the manuscript, when it had only been completed as far as folio 120; and it is pretty safe to say that when the *Kingis Quair* came to be transcribed at folio 191, some considerable period of time had in all probability elapsed. Be that as it may, so far as we are at present able to judge, it appears to be possible to date it only approximately by the regnal year, 1488.

The title given to the *Kingis Quair* is as follows: "Heirefter followis the quair Maid be<sup>1</sup> King James of scotland ye first, callit ye Kingis quair, and Maid quhen his Ma. wes in Inghland," the colophon being, "Explicit, &c., &c., &c., quod Jacobus primus scotorum rex Illustrissimus." It is almost unnecessary to point out that that must be an ascription and not the original title of the poem. James, we may be certain, did not so write about himself. So, too, the writer of the last nineteen stanzas followed only a common style of colophon, and one which was simply a corollary of the ascription itself, when he added, "quod Jacobus primus scotorum rex Illustrissimus."

Now, it may be admitted (1) that both title and colophon designate James the First as the author of the poem

<sup>1</sup> A very pertinent query is put to me by my friend, Professor W. S. M'Cormick, of St. Andrews, viz. whether this *be* may not rather mean *concerning* than *by*: vide Kellner's *Hist. Outlines of Eng. Syntax*, pp. 273-275; Skeat's *Glossary* (Chaucer, *Leg.* 271, *H.F.* 286, etc., etc.).

and (2) that such an ascription occurring in a manuscript is in general deserving of some regard. At most, however, it is only *prima facie* evidence, liable to challenge on many grounds on good cause shown, and so the value of this ascription must depend on the reliability of the anonymous scribes.

Fortunately, as it happens, we are able to test their accuracy. When the manuscript is examined, this is what is found. Many poems ascribed to Chaucer are not his at all. Hoccleve's *Mother of God* has the misleading remark, "explicit oracio Galfridi Chaucere."<sup>1</sup> Another poem beginning "deuise prowes and eke humylitee," has the colophon, "quod Chaucer quhen he was ryght auisit," a good comment on which is that the scribe was himself quite "wrongly advised, for it is plainly not Chaucer's at all."<sup>2</sup> A verse, the first line of which is "Richt as pouert causith sobirness," has also the "quod Chaucere." Frequently printed under the title *Prosperity*, as a genuine Chaucerian composition, it was at last properly rejected on internal evidence by Professor Skeat. In his edition of Chaucer, recently issued from the Clarendon Press, he says, "I have no belief in the genuineness of the piece, though it is not ill written. In general the ascription of a piece to Chaucer in a ms. is valuable. But the scribe of this particular manuscript was reckless."<sup>3</sup> And a little further on, commenting on another poem often printed as one

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* note A, App., and also the *Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (Library edition, Clarendon Press), Vol. I., p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* p. 47.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* 47, 54.

of Chaucer's, with the title *Leaulte vault Richesse*, he says, "if I could be sure that the lines were by a well-known author, I should at once ascribe them to King James I., who might very well have written these and the lines called *Prosperity*."<sup>1</sup> Within the past few weeks, however, the poem *Prosperity* has been identified as part of the prologue written by John Walton to his translation of Boethius' *de Consolatione*, a popular book in the fifteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Luckily, as we have seen, Professor Skeat just stopped short of ascribing the lines to James the First; but the identification of Walton as the author accumulates the evidence against the manuscript. Lydgate's *Complaynt of the Black Knight* is also falsely ascribed thus—"Here endith the Maying and Disporte of Chaucere"; and besides those I have mentioned, there are two other poems mistakenly attributed to the same poet, viz. one beginning, "O hie Emperice and quene celestial," and *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*. The grand result is that out of twelve poems five are correctly attributed to Chaucer, five wrongly. The two remaining are the *Kingis Quair*, now on its trial, and the *Quair of Jelusy*, the colophon of the latter being mutilated,<sup>3</sup> so rendering impossible its classification either among the sheep or the goats.

<sup>1</sup> *Id.* 48, 54. Professor Skeat ends his comment on the worthlessness of the ascriptions with these words: "It is somewhat of a coincidence that the very MS. here discussed is that in which the unique copy of the *Kingis Quair* is preserved."

<sup>2</sup> *Athenaeum*, 28th December, 1895.

<sup>3</sup> The colophon is "quod Auche. . . ." It is supposed to be by "James Affleck," mentioned in *The Lament for the Makars*. The name Auchinleck is, of course, pronounced Affleck. The poem consists of 607 lines. *Vide* Note C, App. p. 81.

It is manifest, therefore, that however valuable the volume may be for the text of early poems, it is practically untrustworthy on the very point on which we are questioning it. The many false ascriptions show the scribes to have been most reckless, and prove them without doubt to be unreliable, if not altogether incredible, witnesses for King James. So much for the manuscript. Let us hear now what is the testimony of the historians.

(b) THE TESTIMONY OF HISTORIANS.

For our present purpose only the statements relating to the personal accomplishments, or, in chroniclers' phrase, the "princely virtues" of James the First require to be considered. In collecting the evidence, we begin with the *Scotichronicon* of Walter Bower, the one contemporary history of the reign of James. Bower's memoir of the king (*de descriptione et virtutibus ejus*) runs through no fewer than eleven chapters (B. xvi., cc. 28 to 38). Though it reads now like a funeral oration, one nevertheless feels it to be a carefully executed portrait from the life. James, it tells us, was of medium stature—a little under the average—but big-boned and powerful. As an athlete he excelled in putting the stone, throwing the hammer (*optimus jactor et mallei projector*), and wrestling (*ad colluctandum*). None could handle a bow better (*optimus arcitenens*) or was more skilful in the tilting ring (*hastiludiator gnarus*). He was so fleet that he seemed to have wings to his feet (*tanquam alipes velocissimus cursor*). He was besides an intrepid horseman and traveller (*equus strenuissimus et viator*).

We are then told at great length about the king's



attainments as a musician. He had a fine voice; could play the organ, psaltery, flute, lyre, drum, and trumpet with masterly perfection (*ad summae perfectionis magisterium*). On the harp he performed like another Orpheus (*tanquam alterum Orpheum*). He was a composer, and had a perfect knowledge of the laws of regular melody and of the art of expressing by notation the ballad music of his country. But his leisure was not wholly given to music. The hours of each day were carefully apportioned. When the cares of his kingdom permitted, he would retire—now for the study of literary art and for writing (*operi artis literatoriae et scripturae*);<sup>1</sup> now for drawing and painting (*protractioni et picturae*); at other times employing himself in the garden or orchard, planting and engrafting; and in all honest sports and recreations that could enliven the spirits of his followers (*ad refocillandum suorum sequacium animos*). As if all that were not enough, we are next told that the royal dignity did not deter James from engaging on occasion in certain mechanical pursuits—pursuits that dire necessity alone compels the noble-born to work at; and then the minutely particular portrait is completed with an allusion to his extraordinary love of book-knowledge (*incredibili aestu, amabat scientiam scripturarum*), and a high tribute to his prudence, justice, fairness, clemency, and reforming zeal. The chronicler is precise in stating that James's accomplishments were acquired during his captivity in England.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I have preferred to translate the words literally: Bellenden (*vide* p. 13 *infra*) rendered them as "grammar and oratory." *Vide* also *Facciolatus voce litteratorius*.

<sup>2</sup> "All these items in his training were duly charged in his ransom

Next in point of time comes John Major, whose *History of Greater Britain*, written while the author was a professor in the Sorbonne, was published at Paris in 1521. The royal portrait is as follows: "Our James was, if we may trust the chroniclers, short of stature but robust and stout of body.<sup>1</sup> . . . He was a man of the finest natural gifts, and of a very lofty spirit. He took, in all manly exercises, a foremost part: farther than any he could put the large stone or throw the heavy hammer; swift he was of foot; a well-skilled musician; as a singer second to none. With the harp like another Orpheus he surpassed the Irish or the Wild Scots who are in that art pre-eminent. It was in the time of his long captivity in France and England that he learned all these accomplishments."

Up to this point Major keeps close to the *Scotichronicon*: he proceeds, however, to add something of his own, and as the passage is all-important in the present inquiry it will be proper here to translate it quite literally. It runs thus:<sup>2</sup> "In the vernacular he was a most skilful composer. Many of his written pieces and songs, remembered still,

money, £40,000 stg." (*Hist. of England under Henry IV.*, by James Hamilton Wylie, Vol. II., ch. 61). Tytler could not resist making the same jocular remark.

<sup>1</sup> Major here quotes Aeneas Sylvius' well-known description of James.

<sup>2</sup> "In vernacula lingua artificiosissimus compositor: cujus codices plurimi et cantilenae memoriter adhuc apud Scotos inter primos habentur. Artificiosum libellum de Regina dum captivus erat composuit, anteq. eam in conjugem duceret: et aliam artificiosam cantilenam ejusdem. Yas sen etc. et jucundum artificiosumq: illum cantum: at beltayn etc. quem alii de Dalketh et Gargeil, mutare studuerunt: quia in arce aut camera clausus seruabatur in qua mulier cum matre habitabat."—Major, Lib. VI., cap. xiii., fol. cxxxv. Paris, 1521. In the Latin text I follow the original punctuation.

are by the Scots esteemed among the best. He wrote a clever little book about the Queen before he took her to wife, and while he was a prisoner (as well as another clever little song of a like kind, *Yas Sen*, etc.; and that merry and clever piece, *At Beltayn*, etc., which certain persons of Dalkeith and Gargeil have tried to alter), for he was kept immured in the castle—or a chamber of it—where the maiden dwelt with her mother.”<sup>1</sup>

Five years later, in 1526, there was published at Paris *The History of Scotland*, written by Hector Boyes. The sketch of James, found scattered through several chapters, is manifestly a compilation from Bower, Major, and Aeneas Sylvius, with a few original touches, for which doubtless the unrivalled imagination of the historian was the sole authority.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare with Mr. Constable's translation : *vide* note B, App. p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> “Ense cum altero dimicare et hasta ad unguem certare sic callebat, ut sic luctantem vidisses, athletam dixisses, etc. . . . Jam vero humaniores artes grammaticam oratoriam poeticamq. ut tum temporis eximie nouerat. In lingua vernacula tam ornata faciebat carmina, ut poetam natum credisses. Latine vero ut tum mos erat, temporis iniuria incondita quidem, attamen grauissimis referta sententiis conficiebat, ut facile appareret si meliores adhibiti preceptores fuissent qualis euasurus tum fuisset. . . . Physices ante arcana cuncta comperta habebat. Theologiam ac jus sic, ut nulli cederet. Ea omnia octodecim annis quibus in Anglia captus erat.” etc.—Lib. xvi., fol. cccliii.

“Vir fuit Jacobus dum in vivis esset, mediae staturae latissimis humeris, constrictissimis lateribus, veluti puellarum esse consueuerunt, clunibus ac pedibus pro corporis habitu moderatis. Unde quidam eum quadratum dixere vera videlicet vocis significatione qua optimi corporis habitus temperaturque indicatur. Praeter eas animi virtutes, quas superius commemoravimus, inter primos iustitiae fuit cultor atque injuriarum acerrimus vindex. Nullis superiorum regum pacis muneribus inferior, plurimos etiam superans.”—Boethius, *Scotorum Historiae*, Lib. xvii., fol. ccclxvii. Paris, 1526.

Boyes had the good fortune to have his *History* translated into Scottish by John Bellenden in 1536. It is well known, however, that the translator took considerable liberties with his original, and the passage relating to James is one of many examples. His models appear to have been chiefly Bower and Major rather than Boyes. This is the substituted portrait: "Yit be benevolence of King Hary, war chosin sa wise and expert praeceptouris to instruk him in virtew and science; that he was na les resolute in every science, than he had bene perpetually occupyit bot in ane: for he wes weill leirnit to fecht with the sward, to just, to turnay, to worsill, to sing and dance:<sup>1</sup> and was ane expert medicinar: richt crafty in playing baith of lute and harp and sindry othir instrumentis of musik. He was expert in gramer oratry<sup>2</sup> and poetry: and maid sa flowand and sententious versis that appeirit weill he was ane naturall borne poete. He was als ane cunning theolog. For he lernit all his science during the time of his captivite."

Forty-two years later another historian appeared, John Leslie, Bishop of Ross. His *History of Scotland*, published at Rome in 1578, was, eighteen years later, translated into Scottish by Father James Dalrymple. The translation, besides being faithful, is a specimen of sixteenth century prose.<sup>3</sup> James, he says, "was of midway stature, brade schoudert, and the rest of his memberis equal with

<sup>1</sup> Dancing, medicine, and theology are Boyes's contribution transmitted through Bellenden.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* note "literaturae," *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> *The Historie of Scotland* by Johne Leslie, Bishop of Ross, and translated in Scottish by Father James Dalrymple, Religious in the Scottis Cloister of Regensburg, 1596. (Scot. Text Society Edition).

this forme. When Aeneas Sylvius wald expreme the conjunction of his memberis with the majestie of his persoune, he calls him squair; as he wald say, his memberis war of sik equalitie that Nature culde forme nathing mare decent to the decore of a king, ather mair perfyte til a Kingis majestie. . . . Althoch he obteynet through benifite of nature sum commend of thir vertues, yit speciallie through the discipline of the zeris quhen he was captive in Ingland, through the kingis favour and gud wil, he was sa weil instructed, and diligent kair of his maistir; and in all sciences was sa scientive and cunning that in quhat science he was cunningest culd na man tel. In al kynde of musik he was excellent, upon the cythar mervellous, in oratrie nane mare artificiois: in poetrie that he usit nocht only through arte to compond verse, but naturallie in a maner to speik verses. This will testifie the dyverse kyndes quhilkes he maid in Scotis metre, sa cunninglie, sa artificioislie, and sa prudentlie that he was thocht verilie equal in quiknes, gravitie, and prudencie to the alde poetes of antiquite. Appeiris wonderfull heir quhat we speik and sik diligence far to excel the diligence of kings in our aige and skairs possible to believe. But quhen it was verilie trew and confirmit be thame quha spak with him, war familiar with him and quha perfytlie knew him, suld be writne to his perpetual prayse.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The part of the original which particularly relates to the main question is as follows: “*praeterquam enim quod musicae omnis generis, ac in primis cythare pulsande exquisitissimam rationem tenebat: ita orator erat, ut ejus dictione nihil fuerit artificiosius: ita poeta, ut carmina non tam arte astrinxisse, quam natura sponte fudisse videretur. Cui rei fidem faciunt carmina diversi generis, que in rythmum Scotice*

And last in the procession comes George Buchanan, whose *History of Scotland* was published in 1581. His portrait of James is as follows: "In stature he was rather below middle size, yet so firm and robust that he easily excelled all his contemporaries in exercises where strength and agility were required; and such the quickness and vigour of his mind that he was ignorant of no art becoming a gentleman to know. He made rough Latin verses extempore, as was the practice of that age. Some poems written by him in the English language are yet extant, in which the excellence of his genius is displayed, though perhaps we might ask for more polish in the execution. In music he was more exquisitely skilled than was either necessary or expedient in a king, for there was no instrument but he could touch with such science that he might have contended with the greatest masters of his day."<sup>1</sup>

When these passages are read together, it becomes clear that we are not dealing with six independent witnesses. The *Scotichronicon* is substantially the original.

illigauit, eo artificio, ut antiquorum poetarum acumen, gravitatem prudentia plane putetur aequasse."—Leslie, *De Origine*, Book VII., p. 277. Rome, 1578.

<sup>1</sup>Carmina latina, ut illud erat seculum, rudia ex tempore fundebat. Anglico quidem sermone poemata ab eo conscripta nonnulla adhuc extant: in quibus ingenii praestantia elucet, expolitior doctrina fortasse requiramus. Geo. Buchanan, *Hist. of Scotland: Opera omnia*. It is perhaps deserving of notice that Montaigne, who was Buchanan's pupil, had a like opinion about certain kingly accomplishments—"more proper for a woman, an advocate, or a sponge, than for a king. . . . Plutarch says that for a king to appear as excellent in these less necessary qualities, is to produce witness against a man's self that he has spent his time and applied his study ill, which ought to have been employed in the acquisition of useful things.—"On Cicero," *Essays*, Vol. I.

Major and Boyes unquestionably derived their information from it, each appropriating just so much as suited himself. When Bellenden came to write his paraphrase of Boyes he had, besides the *Scotichronicon*, John Major's history to draw from. It is doubtful, however, if he used Major in writing the "character" of the king, for it may be the "sententious versis" referred to by him are the Latin verses said to have been extemporized by James—preserved in the *Scotichronicon*, and evidently deemed unworthy of special mention in the eulogy.<sup>1</sup> But in the case of Leslie and Buchanan it is different. That they compiled from Major, Boyes, and Bellenden, as well as from Bower, is well known. Leslie's investigation of facts, however, goes for little; and whatever else in his narrative may be true, it is certain that his statement about "dyvers versis made in Scotis" by James cannot be accepted as "verilie trew and confirmit be thame quha spak with him, war familiar with him and quha perfytlie knew him," resting as it does on the testimony of John Major alone. With Buchanan it is different. Not only does he mention "some poems still extant," he also speaks of them as somewhat lacking in "polish"—a criticism to be expected from one with his classical predilections, and more especially if we might suppose him to be expressing an opinion about a poem like *Peebles to the Play*. We must therefore hold

<sup>1</sup>*Scotichronicon*, Lib. XVI., ch. 15, "Interim dum sic ista se haberent, rex metricavit, dicens suis astantibus—

'Ad turrin fortem ducamus caute cohortem

Per Christi sortem, meruerunt hi quia mortem."

Major the professor peeps out frequently in his History. He comments on James's false quantity thus:—"Ultimam adverbii *caute* longam brevabat: sed regibus sic ex tempore componentibus danda est venia."

that he was able to identify the poems in Major's list—or one or more of them—as we ourselves can do now, and, further, that he took the trouble to do so. But in accepting his literary criticism, we must take care not to give it a value which it does not possess. It certainly does not strengthen Major's statement in the least degree, and we require to fall back on the *History of Greater Britain* as the sole authority for the ascription to James of the vernacular poems.

Before proceeding to examine the passage in Major, let us note here the remarkable fact that neither Dunbar nor Lindsay seems to have known James the First to be among the poets. In the *Lament of the Makars*, printed in 1508, Dunbar enumerates twenty-one Scottish poets—Sir Hew of Eglinton, Heryot, Wyntown, John Clerk, James Affleck, Holland, Barbour, Sir Mungo Lockhart, Clerk of Tranent, Sir Gilbert Hay, Blynd Harry, Sandy Traill, Patrick Johnstoun, Merseir, Roull of Aberdeen, Roull of Corstorphine, Henrysoun, Sir John the Ross, Stobo, Quintin Schaw, and Walter Kennedy—all of them dead when the poem was written except Kennedy, who is spoken of as then lying at death's door. Considering Dunbar's wide knowledge of native poetry, and the theme of the *Lament*, the omission of the name of James the First from that roll of fame is surely most significant. If he was a makar, his name alone is needed to render the catalogue complete.<sup>1</sup> Courtier-poet as Dunbar was,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. David Laing refers, it is true, to the omission of Thomas of Ercildoune, but I agree with Mr. George P. M'Neill (*vide* Huchown of the Awle Ryale, *Scot. Review*, Vol. XIV.) that the "testimony of modern research is plainly destructive of the Rhymers' claim to be regarded as a Scottish poet. The bubble reputation of the poet



who can doubt that he would have been glad of any opportunity of including the name of the great-grandfather of his royal master? Less than a quarter of a century later, we find Sir David Lindsay addressing James the Fifth as "of flowand rhetorick the Flour"—a complimentary allusion to the royal poetic gifts. So, too, in the *Testament and Complaynt*, published about 1527, eight poets of a former time are named—Holland, Hay, Rowle, Henrysoun, Dunbar, Merseir, Kennedy, and Schaw—but no mention is made of James the First. In a question like the one we are discussing, such silence on the part of poets like Dunbar and Lindsay is surely much more than a negative argument.<sup>1</sup>

But to return to the passage in Major. It is needless to conjecture where he, a sixteenth century historian, obtained his information. When his *History* appeared, James the First had been dead for eighty-four years. But by the particular specification of the vernacular poems,

of Ercildoune is but a thin film of fact blown into large and lovely roundness by the airy imaginations of the popular fancy of earlier and the poetic spirits of later times. It was not strong enough to contain all the claims with which successive enthusiasts filled it, and it was in real danger of bursting into nothing."

<sup>1</sup>Lindsay, it may be noted, knew *Peebles to the Play*, for in his *Interlude of Humanitie and Sensualitie* he makes Solace mention—

"My purchess is not worth ane prene,

I may sing Peebles on the Grene."

I might also have cited James VI. as a witness against his ancestor. He wrote verses, and prayed

"Goddis, grant I may obtaine the Laurall trie."

He was, besides, the author of *Reulis and Cautelis to be obseruit and eschewit in Scottis Poesie*, but he never once alludes to James I. or quotes a line of his poetry in the many examples he gives from them "that wrait of auld."

we are able to test, at least to some extent, the accuracy of the statement. His reference to "the little book about the Queen," we may consider to mean the *Kingis Quair*. We shall see immediately how that poem stands the test of criticism. Attempts at identification of the sprightly little song, *Yas sen*, have been frequently made. Pinkerton suggested a song beginning—

"Sen that eyne that workis my weilfair,"

and proposed to amend the line by reading—

"Yas, sen that the eyne that workis my weilfair,"<sup>1</sup>

supposing his foundling to have been mutilated by some scribe; while Ritson, on the ground that there are many typographical errors in Major's *History*, proposed that for the words, *Yas sen*, we should read *Sen yat*. When the song itself has been discovered, it may be possible to decide the question of the authorship; at present no judgment is possible one way or another.

The other poem, *At Beltayn*, was long ago identified as *Peebles to the Play*, the first line of which is,

"At Beltayn, quhen ilk bodie bownis,"

and until comparatively recent times the royal authorship was scarcely questioned.<sup>2</sup> Modern criticism, however, has

<sup>1</sup>Sibbald's *Chronicles of Scottish Poetry*, Vol. I., p. 55; and Irving's *History of Scottish Poetry*, p. 153.

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Percy, the modern discoverer of *Peebles to the Play*, happening to remark that it began with the same two words, immediately pronounced it to be the song ascribed by Major to James I., and it was soon after published by Pinkerton as such. Mr. William Tytler concurred, chiefly "because the language resembles that of *Christ's Kirk on the Green*"; Pinkerton, on the other hand, accepted *Christ's*

reversed the verdict, and it is scarcely necessary now to adduce proof against James's claims to the authorship. Professor Skeat is in perfect accord with all the best authorities when he says, "the moment we come to examine the poem, the notion of attributing it to James the First is entirely out of the question."<sup>1</sup> The same critic, laying stress on the fact that Major did not write till the sixteenth century, adds that "his testimony is almost worthless at best, the only surprising thing being that he is right as to the *Kingis Quair* itself. . . . The question of the authorship has been discussed *ad nauseam*, but the internal evidence ought to decide the question."<sup>2</sup>

With that criticism as to the value of Major's testimony most persons will concur—a criticism, let it be noted, which also concedes that the internal evidence alone, the pure reason of the case, must decide the authorship of the *Kingis Quair*.

*Kirk on the Green* "because the style is similar to *Peebles to the Play*!" Sibbald, a far more acute critic, disbelieved in both poems. Ritson accepted *Peebles to the Play*, *vide* Sibbald, note, p. 137, and Pinkerton's *Select Scottish Ballads*, Vol. II.

<sup>1</sup> *Intro.*, p. xx.

<sup>2</sup> *Intro.*, p. xx.

## THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

## (a) THE DIALECT OF THE POEM.

HAVING reached the second branch of our inquiry, it is important, in considering the internal evidence, to have certain biographical facts about the supposed author always before us. For the particular question to be discussed, the salient facts are—(1) that James when taken prisoner by the English in 1406 was in the twelfth year of his age, (2) that his captivity lasted till 1424, a period of about eighteen years, and (3) that he was educated in England in a manner which left nothing to be desired.

When the poem is read carefully, two things clearly appear. The first is, that the dialect employed from beginning to end is the Northern—the speech that prevailed throughout the Lowlands of Scotland. The second is, that the author has engrafted on that dialect many Chaucerian inflexions—inflexions peculiar to the Midland English but quite foreign to the Lowland Scottish dialect—the result being that he has produced a poem in what has been called “a purely artificial dialect, such as probably was never spoken.”<sup>1</sup>

In noting some of those Midland grammatical forms, one has the advantage of having Professor Skeat as guide. He observes that there are many examples of (1) the artificial suffix *e* or *en*, as in words like *changē*, *deseruē*,

<sup>1</sup> Introd., *Kingis Quair*, p. xxv. While recognising some force in the grounds assigned for this opinion of Professor Skeat, I am far from being completely convinced. It seems to me that the artificiality is very much overstated.

lettë, wirken, seken, trusten, helpen, etc.—a suffix quite unknown in Lowland Scottish; (2) words monosyllabic in Lowland Scottish made dissyllabic as in Chaucer, like hertë, pryncë, eyë, wisë, chargë, etc.; (3) the plural of adjectives and also the definite form of adjectives denoted, as in Chaucer, by a final *e*, in words like grenë, fairë, freschë; his fairë, that freschë, the suetë grenë. Further, he observes that the rimes are Northern rimes throughout, and that words are rimed together which Chaucer never admitted.<sup>1</sup>

Now in this extensive imitation the Scottish author has blundered frequently. His use of certain forms is neither Chaucerian nor Lowland Scottish. As regards his marking adjectives with a final *e*, let us hear Professor Skeat's criticism. He says, "But here comes in a most curious result. Chaucer does *not* in general use the final *e* in adjectives occurring in the singular and indefinitely. This is a refinement of grammar to which James did not attain. It is the fate of writers in an artificial dialect that they make mistakes of this character, just as Spenser has perpetrated some extraordinary offences against grammatical propriety in his *Fairy Queen*. Accordingly we find the king wrongly adding a final *e* to indefinite adjectives in several places: he seems to have regarded it as a poetical embellishment to be added or dropped at pleasure, a theory which had doubtless great practical convenience. . . . The worst example of a false concord occurs in the first line of stanza 117, 'and quhen I wepe and *stenten* othir quhile.'

<sup>1</sup> Introd., p. xxv. *et seq.* "The rimes are, I believe, Northern rimes throughout, and mostly only single rimes after the Northern fashion of ignoring the final *e*. We find words rimed together which Chaucer never admitted."—*Id.* xxxiv.

It will be observed that the form *stenten* is absolutely required for the scansion: yet it is a *plural* form, just as if we should use the expression *ego amamus* in writing Latin. Yet it is quite explicable: it is a translation in Chaucerian language of the Northern word *styntis*, for in the Northern dialect the phrases *I stintis* and *we stintis* were once equally correct."

Professor Skeat tells us he was startled when he found the author of the *Kingis Quair* abandoning the grammar used in the Lowlands of Scotland, and attempting so much to imitate the midland inflexions of Chaucer, because it rendered the poem by no means what it had been supposed to be—an example of Northern dialect.<sup>1</sup> Now it appears to me that the grammatical analysis would have startled him in quite another way than the one it did had he been careful to take his bearings. But starting with the *a priori* assumption of James being the author of the poem, he misled himself, and failed besides to reap the reward of his critical labours on the text.

Let us consider the question of the dialect of the poem in the light of the biographical facts. First of all the dialect of the poem is in its groundwork unquestionably Lowland Scottish, with some foreign grammatical forms

<sup>1</sup> "We are at once met by the startling fact that he abandons the grammar used in the Lowlands of Scotland and attempts to imitate all the inflexions of the Midland dialect of Chaucer, evidently considering him as furnishing the true model of literary form."—*Id.* xxv. I am not to be held as admitting that the author *abandons the grammar used in the Lowlands of Scotland and attempts to imitate all the inflexions* of the Midland dialect of Chaucer. I have already said that the artificiality of the poem is, in my opinion, much overstated by Professor Skeat. *Vide* Note C, App. p. 81.

engrafted on it. Were the question, for example, simply—Whether is the poem written by a Lowland Scot or by an Englishman? the answer could only be “by a Scot.” That being so we may ask, How did James, who left Scotland in his twelfth year, come to be able in 1423 to employ the Scottish dialect as a literary medium? His education for eighteen years had been that of an Englishman. His preceptors were Englishmen. The poem, if James was the author, should have been, one would expect, in the Midland dialect—the speech of the Court—with perhaps here and there a few words peculiar to the North that he might chance to have remembered from boyhood or have acquired from occasional intercourse with a chaplain or some of the Scottish nobles who now and again were allowed to visit him in his exile. Are we to believe that the prince, educated in all the wisdom of the English, had through the eighteen years of his captivity retained the vernacular of his childhood so as to be able to write it as well as any Scot who had never been out of his native country? That certainly will not be readily believed. Professor Skeat saw the difficulty. How does he attempt to explain it? “James,” he tells us, “was perfectly acquainted with the Lowland dialect. This is ascertained by the preservation of a most interesting document entirely in the king’s own hand: written at Croydon in 1412. It runs as follows:<sup>1</sup> ‘Jamis throu

<sup>1</sup>I take the translation from the *Nat. MSS. of Scotland*, Part II., lxii. Professor Skeat points out Chalmers’ misprints, *till*, *al*, *daie* for *til*, *all*, *dai*, but there are errors in the version he himself gives, e.g. *charterit* and *charts* should be *chartrit* and *chartris*. The facsimile reads “chanusselur,” a mistake for “chaunssellur.”

the grace of God. Kynge of Scottis. Til all that this lettre heris or seis sendis gretynge. Wit ye that we haue grauntit and be this presentis lettres grauntis a speciall confirmacioun in the mast forme til oure traiste and wele belofit Cosyng Schyr William of Douglas of Drumlangrig of all the landis that he is possessit and chartrit of within the Kyngdome of Scotlande that is for to say the landis of drumlangrig of Hawyke and of Selkirke the whilkis chartris and possessiouns be this lettre we conferme and wil for the mare sekernes this our confirmacioun be formabilli efter the fourme of our chaunssellur and the tenor of his chartris selit with oure grete sele in tyme to come, in witness of the whilkis this presentis lettres we wrate with our propre hande undir the signet usit in selyng of oure lettres as now at Croidoune the last dai of November the yere of oure lorde I<sup>mo</sup> cccc<sup>o</sup>xij<sup>o</sup>.”

Professor Skeat found the charter in Chalmers' edition of the *Kingis Quair*, where it is printed in facsimile—“the only thing of value,” he says, “in an otherwise valueless edition,”<sup>1</sup>—and he accepts it as sufficient proof of James's knowledge of Lowland Scottish. It is surely the strangest adminicle of evidence ever put forward in a serious probation. If it is to have the slightest value attached to it, we must suppose James at the age of eighteen skilful enough to prepare a legal charter-by-progress; for, if he simply transcribed it from a draft prepared for him, it will not prove the least knowledge

<sup>1</sup> The facsimile in Chalmers is no facsimile. It is “restored,” as any one can see by comparing it with the facsimile in the *Nat. MSS. of Scotland*, *supra*. The king's signet has quite disappeared, yet in Chalmers it is given as perfect!



on his part of Lowland Scottish. Now, a fifteenth century youth could have been no better qualified, in ordinary circumstances, to prepare such a writ than a youth in the present day: and if we grant the exiled prince to have been as expert as the average law apprentice to-day—which is surely a liberal assumption—the verdict of those qualified to judge will decide against the document as constituting any real evidence of his power to compose in his native tongue. Such charters are not prepared in the present day by the conveyancer without the style-book, neither were they in any of the earlier centuries.

If it were deserving of serious consideration—which it is not—it might even be possible on several grounds to impugn its authenticity,<sup>1</sup> but it is enough at present to show that from its very nature James cannot have been

<sup>1</sup>The following general objections against its authenticity readily suggest themselves, viz.:

(a) The formula used. The document is not a "Signature," *i.e.* a warrant from which the charter of lands held of the Crown always originated; nor a "Warrant" for expediting a charter approved by the King or his Barons of Exchequer; neither is it, in a strict sense, to be spoken of as a Crown charter; yet it unquestionably is highly technical. In the first quarter of the fifteenth century, all Crown charters were written in Latin; if this document is genuine, it is, as being in the vernacular, unique. It purports to be a charter confirming Sir William Douglas in the lands of Drumlanrig, etc., and I would therefore describe it as intended to be a Charter of Confirmation: *vide (c) infra*.

(b) It is the sole extant instance of the exercise of sovereignty by James during the entire eighteen years of his captivity.

(c) It is the only specimen of James's caligraphy extant. There is nothing of his known to be preserved in the Register House, Edinburgh, the British Museum, or the Record Office, London.

(d) The charter is written in the beautiful professional hand of the scrivener or church notary, and for that reason it is extremely unlikely

the draughtsman, but, at most, only the copyist. It is certainly no voucher at all for his knowledge of and power to write in Lowland Scottish.

We must therefore, each for himself, decide the question on the plain facts, namely,—that James, eleven years and seven months old when captured, exiled in England for eighteen years, and educated there in a manner that left nothing to be desired, yet retained—if we are to believe the editors—his Northern dialect so as to be able to use it as a literary medium in 1423. The historical evidence, be it remembered, professes to tell the latest date when the poem was composed. The Bodleian

to be by James. If he did write it, then it is a unique instance in conveyancing of a sovereign performing the humble office of scrivener.

(e) Lord Archibald Douglas received a grant of lands “from his Aunt Isobel, styled Countess of Mar, sometime before 1405, for in that year Robert III. bestowed the lands on Sir David Fleming, of Biggar, on the plea that they were alienated without the royal assent. But on 30 Novr., 1412, while still a prisoner in England, King James I. confirmed the Charter of Isobel in favour of Sir Wm. Douglas” (*The Douglas Book*, Vol. I., 320). To get back the family lands, or at least to keep alive the claim, during the Regency, there was a motive for fabricating such a document.

(f) The charter appears never to have passed the Great Seal.

(g) The charter is not witnessed, and the King’s signet, which might have been subjected to crucial test, has quite disappeared. “To receive the Seal, two slips of vellum have been affixed in the form of a cross and the seal impressed at the crossing: the wax has been mostly rubbed off” (*vide Nat. MSS. of Scotland*, Part II., Pref. xiv.). The absence of the signet (the most important thing of the grant) is itself calculated to arouse suspicion.

(h) The language of the charter seems to me to belong to a later time than 1412: and the terminology is also in my opinion of later date. There is *inter alia* the suspicious plural form, “the quhilkis chartris.” What are the arguments that can be advanced for the authenticity of the charter?

manuscript says expressly: "maid be King James of Scotland, etc., quhen his Majestie wes in England"; so too John Major in terms similar: "Before his marriage and during his captivity he wrote a book about the Queen," etc.

Now, for James to have employed the Northern dialect in such a poem,—even were it credible that he was able to do so—would surely have been ungracious, unless, indeed, like another Lucentio, wooing under the guise of a schoolmaster, he was attuning Joan's ear to the rude speech of his Scottish subjects, whose queen she was soon to be. Among his English tutors, too, the product of his Muse must have produced something like consternation, when they found their accomplished pupil using unfamiliar Northern words, and transgressing the rules of accidence they had been striving during so many years to inculcate. Was the chicken turning out a gosling and taking to the water? The rugged dialect doubtless was bad enough, but the *I stenten* and such like blunders, one may well imagine, must have made tutors despair of imparting the courtly Midland speech to any foreigner, caught ever so young!<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I have already expressed a doubt as to much of the alleged artificiality (Notes, pp. 21, 23). As regards the example here cited, my friend, Mr. George Neilson, referred me to line 2 of st. 104, and line 1 of st. 54,

104. "A quhile I stynt, abiding efter grace,"

54. "Anothirquhile the lytill nightingale,"

and suggested that the false accidence in the line of st. 117,

"And quhen I wepe and stynten othir quhile,"

is due to an error of the scribe—the simple emendation being,

"And quhen I wepe and stynt anothirquhile."

Were I an editor I certainly would have no hesitation about accepting the amended reading.

But, in deciding the question, we can have aid from other facts which are certainly very relevant to the present issue. The *Kingis Quair* is not the only Scottish poem that exhibits the strange admixture of Northern and Midland dialect. It is a fact beyond dispute, that about the middle of the fifteenth century—between 1440 and 1480—the imitation of Chaucerian inflexions was a vogue among Scottish poets. There is a group of poems very similar in this respect to the *Kingis Quair*. To name only three, there are *The Romaunt of the Rose*,<sup>1</sup> *The Court of Love*, and *Lancelot of the Lak*. In these, Chaucerian imitations abound. Each of them contributes inflexions that have never been used by English writers “since the language has had written monuments to show what it really was”—the “errors of men striving to do what they had not the special knowledge to accomplish.”<sup>2</sup> Nor are the errors to be attributed to a Scottish scribe wilfully altering an English original; “the very reverse,” says Dr. J. A. H. Murray, “appears manifest.”<sup>3</sup> In editing *Lancelot* for the Early English Text Society, Professor Skeat admits the same thing: “It is most probable that

<sup>1</sup>(Fragment B, ll. 1706-5810) Chaucer's Works, *Ib.*, Vol. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Lounsbury's *Studies in Chaucer*, Vol. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in *Ratis Raving*, by J. R. Lumby (E. E. T. S.), Pref. xi. Dr. Murray refers to the “remarkable transformation which the dialect has undergone in Sir Lancelot,” leading him to suppose that it was not due to the copyist, “but to a previous writer, if not to the author himself, who perhaps affected *Southernism* as was done a century later by Lyndesay and Knox.” . . . “The Southern forms are certainly often shown by the rhyme to be original, and such a form as *tone* for *tane*=taken, is more likely to have been that of a Northerner trying to write Southern, than of a Southern scribe who knew no such word existed in his dialect.”

the older copy was written in the Lowland Scottish dialect, the whole tone going to prove this."<sup>1</sup> The late Richard Morris—*nomen clarum venerabile*—was of the same opinion. In *Lancelot*, the Scottish author ventured once or twice to abandon Northern rimes, but, as we have seen, the author of the *Kingis Quair* was more cautious. His "'prentice han'" was more than sufficiently exercised in striving after something of the mellifluousness of his master Chaucer, without essaying the more complicated Midland rimes.

This would be the proper place, no doubt, to discuss at large the diction of the *Kingis Quair*, but I prefer to leave the task to others better qualified.<sup>2</sup> At present I desire merely to direct attention to a few points, each one of which by itself has been made by philologists a criterion for determining the early or late date, in the fifteenth century, of a literary composition. These are<sup>3</sup>—(1) the presence of certain French words found in Scottish writers later than 1440, (2) the plural form *quhilkis*, (3) the distinguishing adjective *ane* before a consonant, (4) the participle in *yt* or *it*, (5) the pronouns *thaire* and *thame*, and (6) the employment of the verb *to do* in the emphatic conjugation.

<sup>1</sup>*Id.*, Pref. xvi.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* Note C, App. p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> In Dr. Murray's brilliant essay, *The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland* (*Philological Society's Transactions*, 1872), one finds many suggestions by which to test the diction of a poem like the *Kingis Quair*, e.g. (1) the presence of certain French words found in Scottish writers after 1440, (2) the plural form *quhilkis*. (3) One of Dr. Murray's arguments against King James's authorship of *Peebles to the Play* (and, if I may say so, in my opinion, a sound one) is the repeated use of the indefinite article or distinguishing adjective, *ane*, before a consonant—an impossible characteristic of a poem earlier in date than the middle of the fifteenth century. Mr. Lumby also quotes approvingly

By those who return a verdict on the issue under debate, the significant failure of the poem—assuming it to belong to the first quarter of the fifteenth century—to answer to any of these tests will be considered, as well as the biographical facts which condition any title of James to be acknowledged as the author.

(b) THE COURT OF LOVE.

We shall take another point furnished by the internal evidence of the poem.

the following dictum: "The indefinite article is as in Northern English of same date, *a* before a consonant, *an* or *ane* before a vowel, in contrast with the Middle Scottish usage, as in *ane buik*, *ane kyng*, which appears in the Acts of the Scottish Parliament between 1475 and 1500." Now *ane* is found in the *Kingis Quair* before a consonant at least eight times. It occurs in st. 28, 48, 49, 70, 76, 98, 154, 160. Strangely enough, Professor Skeat has omitted *ane* in his glossarial index to the *Kingis Quair*. (4) Dr. Murray, referring to the "*Craft of Deyng*" (vide pref., *Ratis Raving*, p. xi.) as a specimen of the Scottish language probably next in age to the early part of the Royal MS. of Wyntoun's *Cronykil* (c. 1440), says, that it is later than that MS. "appears from the fact that while the past participle in Wyntoun still retains the Anglo-Saxon *d*, ending usually in *yd*, in the '*Craft of Deyng*' it has become the more exclusively Scotch *yt*. Probably, therefore, we may consider it as representing the language of the middle of the century. . . . '*Ratis Raving*' is apparently later, the orthography being much more assimilated to that of the middle period." Now the same is true of the *Kingis Quair*. The past participle in *d* and *yd* is absent altogether, and the later form *yt* scarcely appears. Throughout the poem it is found in the latest form *it*—e.g. *clippit*, *decretit*, etc. Note also the rimed participle in st. 162. If literary criticism has hitherto proceeded on sound lines, the like canon applied to the *Kingis Quair* will determine its date as unquestionably later than 1440. (5) The pronouns *hem* = them, and *hir* = their, are not once found, but always *thame* and *thaire*. I may cite, e.g., stanzas 78 to 93 inclusive, where *thaire* and *thame* occur nearly fifty times! If *hem* and *hir* be substituted, the music of the verse is most sadly marred. (6) The verb *to do* is

In 1783, when preparing his transcript for the press, Mr. Tytler observed the many Chaucerian imitations, and in particular noted a striking resemblance between the *Kingis Quair* and the well-known poem, the *Court of Love*. His note is as follows: "No doubt our poet must have seen and had in his eye Chaucer's *Court of Love* when he wrote his own poem"; but having in that particular manner drawn attention to the fact, he left each reader to collate the passages for himself.<sup>1</sup>

When we come, however, to the Scottish Text Society edition, we remark at once a difference in the method of editing. The text itself receives the most painstaking care; meanings of words are explained; nice points of grammar are discussed; phrases and short passages are compared with Chaucerian poems; but in no single instance with the *Court of Love*.

employed very frequently in the emphatic conjugation throughout the poem. *Vide* Lounsbury's *Studies in Chaucer*, Vol. 1, as to this test.

The fifth category has, of course, a bearing on the English characteristics of the *Kingis Quair*, *hem* and *hir* not being Scottish of the period.

Perhaps we shall hear of the misdeeds of scribes as a disturbing factor, but their backs, broad though they be, will never carry the load of reconciling the editorial theory with the actual text of the *Kingis Quair*, preserving throughout its anomalies a unity so distinctive. *Vide* Note C, App. p. 81.

I may perhaps better state here that I cannot accept many of the examples of "Chaucerian inflexions" noted by Professor Skeat as occurring in the *Kingis Quair*. When due value is given to the vowel sounds of Lowland Scottish, scansion is obtained, in the preponderance of cases, without the necessity for the sounding of final *e* as a distinct syllable.

<sup>1</sup>I ought to mention that Mr. Tytler, in the case of the description of Rosial, quotes the stanzas *ad longum*, p. 85 *et seq.* His footnotes also show that he had the *Court of Love* well in his view at all times, and he probably saw no need for particular collation.

What is the explanation? In the last century, and indeed far down into the present, everybody believed the *Court of Love* to be by Chaucer, and consequently it was read by Tytler as critically as any of the genuine Chaucerian poems. The value of his observation, I may remark, is not in the least degree affected by the error in regarding the poem as by Chaucer. Simply his critical acumen is on trial.<sup>1</sup> We can test the point precisely as he did, by reading both poems carefully. The imperfect information about the authorship of the *Court of Love* merely imposed a limitation, and rendered impossible the perception of the true bearing of his observation on the question of the authorship of the *Kingis Quair*. That was all.

In the case of Professor Skeat, however, it is different. It is not wronging him to say that he never for a moment seems to have had the least doubt, any more than Tytler, about James the First being the author of the *Kingis Quair*; on the contrary, he goes beyond any former editor, and confidently fixes the very month and year (May, 1423) when it was composed by the king; and as a consequence he had no choice but to push aside the *Court of Love*. For if James was the author of the *Kingis Quair*, it was impossible he could have seen the *Court of Love*; and, on the other hand, it is equally true that if the author of the *Kingis Quair* saw the *Court of Love*, and had it in his view when he wrote, James the First could not have been the author.<sup>2</sup> The question therefore resolves

<sup>1</sup> I would bear testimony to his acumen, which is everywhere evident.

<sup>2</sup> *Studies in Chaucer*, Vol. 1. Professor Lounsbury remarks that the evidence against the *Court of Love* being a Chaucerian poem is



itself into one of fact, and falls to be adjudicated after a fair comparison of the one poem with the other.

Before proceeding to compare the poems, I desire to say that I believe the theme of the *Kingis Quair* to be the story of James the First's courting of Joan Beaufort. There is no hint of the names of either of the lovers, or of their rank; all the same, I see no reason for believing them to be other than James and Joan.

Every one who studies it carefully will discover that the author, whoever he may have been, was a close student of Chaucer. He seems indeed to have been so familiar with the works, and so saturated with the style and mannerisms of the English poet, that he probably often was almost unconscious that he was imitating. The many stray lines found throughout the poem, almost literally transferred from Chaucer, and, it may be, written down from memory, as well as the palpable imitation of the passage in *The Knight's Tale*, where we are told of Palamon's first sight of Emelie, are obvious to any reader now; but there are also many reminiscences pervading the poem which, though not so apparent, are nevertheless present, and easily recognizable by every one who is acquainted with the works of Chaucer.

At present, however, we are only concerned with these Chaucerian imitations in so far as they affect the phase we are about to discuss, namely, the relation of the *Kingis Quair* to the *Court of Love*. For it is undoubted that the anonymous author of the *Court of Love* was,

overwhelming. It fails to conform to every test which has been laid down. There are things in it which point to the composition of the poem as belonging to the latter half of the fifteenth century.

like the author of the *Kingis Quair*, an extensive borrower from Chaucer; and in considering how far any passage or incident in the *Kingis Quair* is an imitation, it will be necessary to compare it, not only with the *Court of Love*, but also with the works of Chaucer, to ascertain whether it be borrowed direct from Chaucer, or be related to his poems only in the second degree. Let me suppose that in the *Kingis Quair* the lady had been described as "of mene stature," which is the description of Criseyde and also of Rosial. In such an instance of exact correspondence it would be absurd to contend that the author of the *Kingis Quair* had necessarily borrowed from the *Court of Love*. So, again, where we find Criseyde, Rosial, and Joan described as having "golden hair," such agreement practically proves nothing. On the other hand, where we find in the *Kingis Quair* only a far-off resemblance to Chaucer, but a close correspondence to the diction or particular treatment of the *Court of Love*, it is equally absurd to point to Chaucer as the original—which, it seems to me, is what Professor Skeat has done in a considerable number of instances, as I shall endeavour to show.

But here some one may ask, How can we know that the author of the *Court of Love* did not imitate the works of Chaucer and also the *Kingis Quair*? May not the *Kingis Quair* be the exemplar of the *Court of Love*? Such a thing has never been suggested hitherto by any one: nor is it likely to be by any one who reads the two poems critically. The *Court of Love* is excellently handled as regards its theme; its unity is indeed one of its great charms. It is not, I hope, unduly to depreciate the *Kingis*

*Quair* as a poetical composition to say that it lacks artistic unity.<sup>1</sup> We feel in reading it, that the author, wishing to celebrate the wooing of the royal lovers, has used a model not particularly well adapted to his purpose. It is constructed, pieced together—the parts not well joined. There is a good deal in it that is mechanical, notwithstanding the poetic beauty of much of its detail.

In the first forty-six stanzas, the author is much less hampered by his models than in the remainder of the poem. It is, however, when he reaches stanza 74 that one feels the theme beginning to run less smoothly. The visit to the Court of Venus is simply an addendum, and the author's difficulty now is to adjust conventional details in a real love story. While he uses Chaucer freely as a model in many details in the opening stanzas, it appears to me to be unquestionable that he also had the *Court of Love* in his view, although that poem is more particularly requisitioned in the later portion of the *Kingis Quair*. To myself it appears plain that the author of the *Kingis Quair*, being better acquainted with the Chaucerian poems, more easily adapted portions of these poems as he required. The Chaucerian imitations are more in the texture of his poem—the warp and woof—than the other. He seems to have gathered out of the *Court of Love*, here and there, such things as suited his purpose, and to have been less able to assimilate them with his own work. Hence the

<sup>1</sup> Professor Skeat admits this himself. He says (Introd., p. xiv.), "Notwithstanding that some art has been shown in giving a certain connectedness to the whole by (as I suppose) the subsequent introduction of occasional connecting phrases, some want of order still remains."

imitations of the *Court of Love* are easily identified, because generally lying more on the surface.

For example, I agree with Tytler that the description of Joan, beginning at stanza 46, is modelled on the *Court of Love*.<sup>1</sup> Here are the passages, placed side by side :

"KINGIS QUAIR."	"COURT OF LOVE."
46. "Off hir array the form gif I sall write Toward hir goldin haire and rich atyre In fret-wise couchit was with perliss quhite And grete balas lemyng as the fyre, With mony ane emeraut and faire saphire ; And on hir hede a chaplet fresch of hewe Off plumys partit rede and quhite and blew." . . . . .	112. . . . "Her here as gold"  116. . . . . "But how she was arrayed, if ye me bidde, That shall I wele discovere you and saye A bend of gold and silk ful fresh and gaye With here in tresse, y'broudered ful wele Right smoothly kempt and shin- ing every dele."
48. "About hir nek quhite as the fyre amaille A gudely cheyne of smale or- feuarye Quhareby there hung a ruby, without faille,	117. "About hir neck a floure of fresh devise, With rubies set that lusty were to sene, And she in gown was light and summer-wise,

<sup>1</sup> The stanzas of the *Court of Love* not being numbered, I have thought it desirable to indicate each stanza cited by me. There are in the edition of the *Court of Love* I have used (Bell's *Chaucer*, edition 1889, Vol. IV., p. 280) 206 stanzas in all. By marking opposite each its number, the reader will very easily find the passages cited. In Tytler's edition, the *Kingis Quair* is divided into Cantos without any warrant from the MS. To follow Tytler's numbering, throughout Canto II., add the number 19; Canto III., add 73; Canto IV., add 123; Canto V., add 151; Canto VI., add 172.

Lyke to ane hert schapin verily, That, as a sperk of lowe so wantonly Semyt birnyng upon hir quhyte throthe; Now gif there was gud partye, god it wote!"	Shapen ful wel, the colour was of grene, With aureit seint about hir sides clene, With divers stones precious and rich, Thus was she rayed yet saw I never her lich."
. . . . .	. . . . .
50. "In hir was zouth, beautee with humble aport, Bountee, richesse and womanly facture, God better wote than my pen can report."	119. "In bounte, favour, port and semelinesse, Pleasaunt of figure, mirroure of delight, Gracious to sene and root of al gentilnes."
. . . . .	. . . . .

In arraying a Joan or a Rosial, the early poets were fond of barbaric splendour—gold, jewels, precious stones, rich trappings, and all accessories calculated to produce wonder and delight: the "gud partye" was a secondary thing. Now, when the two portraits are carefully examined, the likeness—in general and in particular—is striking.<sup>1</sup> Joan, indeed, is the more bejewelled, but her

"Grete balas lemyng as the fyre  
With mony ane emeraut and faire saphire,"

most likely was suggested by another passage in the *Court of Love*, where we read:

12. "No sapphire of Inde, no ruby rich of price  
There lacked than, nor emerald so grene,  
Balais Turkeis, ne thing to my devise."

<sup>1</sup> Tytler very properly observes that "in the Prince's situation, viewing from his window in the Tower of Windsor the beautiful Jane walking below in the palace garden, he could not with propriety have given a minute description of her features," as the author of the *Court of Love* has done in the case of Rosial.

It certainly is notable to find *balas*=ruby,<sup>1</sup> used in both poems. The word is non-Chaucerian, nor does it once occur, so far as I know, in any other English poem of the fifteenth century.

Professor Skeat says the description of Joan should be compared with the description of Criseyde in Chaucer's *Troilus* (B. v., ll. 807-827), which is as follows :

116. " Criseyde mene was of hir stature  
 Ther-to of shap, of face and eek of chere  
 Ther mighte been no fairer creature  
 And ofte tyme this was hir manere  
 To gon y-tressed with hir heres clere  
 Doun by hir coler at hir bak behinde  
 Which with a threde of gold she wolde binde.
117. " And, save hir browes joyneden y-fere  
 Ther nas no lak, in ought I can espyen ;  
 But for to speken of hir eyen clere  
 Lo trewely, they writen that hir syen  
 That Paradys stood formed in hir yën  
 And with her riche beautee ever more  
 Strof love in hir, ay which of hem was more.
118. " She sobre was, eek simple and wys with-al  
 The best y-norissshed eek that mighte be  
 And goodly of hir speche in general  
 Charitable, estatliche, lusty and free,  
 No never-mo ne lakkede hir pitee ;  
 Tendre-herted, slydinge of corage ;  
 But trewely I can not telle hir age."

Now, I venture to think, most persons reading the three descriptions will be of opinion that between Criseyde and

<sup>1</sup> Balay est d'un rose clair, le vrai rubis d'un rouge vif de cochenille (*Glossaire Français du Moyen Age*, Laborde). Tytler quotes the lines thus :

" No saphire of Inde, no rubie rich of price  
 Nor emeraud so grene, nor Balais."—p. 82.

YES IT DOES  
 IN CHAUCER'S  
 TROILUS

Joan there is scarcely any resemblance, and not much either between Criseyde and Rosial. There are indeed reminiscences of Chaucer both in the descriptions of Joan and of Rosial, but they certainly are not modelled on Criseyde; besides, it is most observable that some of these reminiscences are the very points in which the *Kingis Quair* and the *Court of Love* differ the one from the other, showing, as it seems to me, that the author of the *Kingis Quair* avoided too slavish imitation of the *Court of Love* by choosing just such felicitous phrases from Chaucer as appeared best to suit his purpose.

It would be tedious to attempt here to go through the poems, tracing the imitations one by one; indeed it is scarcely possible to do so satisfactorily, for besides the verbal imitations there is often an affinity of thought which will appear only to the reader who is prepared to take some trouble for himself. I must therefore confine myself to a few examples, leaving much to be sought out by those who are interested to pursue the subject further.<sup>1</sup>

In stanza 51 of the *Kingis Quair*, which immediately follows the description of Joan, the poet makes James, when he realizes the lady to be "a warldly creature,"<sup>2</sup> to say:

"And at the last my luke unto the hevin  
I threwe furthwith and said thir versis sevin."

"Thir versis sevin," curiously enough, means the *seven-line stanza* which follows, beginning:

<sup>1</sup> Vide note D, Appendix, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> Contrast with st. 118 of the *Court of Love*, where Rosial is described as "lich a thing celestial"; also st. 141, where she is spoken of as an "erthly creature."

52. "O Venus clere ! of goddis stellifyit !  
To whom I yelde homage and sacrificse."

Now, in the *Court of Love*, immediately following the description of Rosial, the poet makes Philogenet to say :

120. "And up I put my bille with sentence clere."

The "bille" which, it is noticeable, extends to *seven stanzas*, is the exact equivalent of "thir versis sevin," and we find Philogenet doing homage to Rosial. It begins :

121. "O ye fresh, of beaute the root,"

and goes on :

122. "Now am I caught and unware suddenly  
With persaunt stremes of your eye so clere,  
Subject to been and serven you mekely  
And al your man."

"Al your man" is of course the phrase for "your vassal"—words of homage. Rosial replies in one stanza, and Philogenet again addresses her, ending thus :

129. "Beseche I you but seen my wil and rede,  
And let your answer put me out of drede."

Do we not hear the very echo of these words in the concluding lines of James's "bille"?

52. "Now help me furth and for your merci lede  
My hert to rest that deis nere for drede."

In stanza 77 of the *Kingis Quair*, the poet enters the Court of Venus, and sees "within a chamber large, rowm and faire," a great crowd of devotees. Stanza 78 describes the "grete repaire of peple" :

78. "This is to seyne, that present in the place  
Me thocht I saw of every nacioun  
Loueris that endit had thaire lyfis space



In lovis service, mony a mylioun  
 Off quhois chancis maid is mencion  
 In diverse bukis, quho thame list to se  
 And therefore here thaire names lat I be."<sup>1</sup>

No doubt the poet, when he referred to "diverse bukis," was thinking, among others, of Chaucer's *Prologue to Good Women*, as well as of the *Court of Love*; but his borrowing is almost entirely from the latter poem. The "mony a mylioun" is "many a thousand" and "a thousand million" in the *Court of Love*. But let us examine some of the details; it will not be uninteresting.

I can only refer to stanzas 79 to 89 of the *Kingis Quair*, as they are too long to quote—where the lovers at the Court of Venus are enumerated. We hear of, among others, "martris and confessoris," "gude folkis" with "hedis hore"; "fresche folkis yong"; "a full grete nowmer" "in capis wyde and lang" with "thaire hudis all atoure thair eyen"; a "warld of folke," showing by their countenance that "thaire hertis semyt full of displeasance."<sup>2</sup> Here is stanza 83:

"And therewithall apperit unto me  
 A voce and said, 'tak hede, man and behold:  
 Zonder thou seis the hiest stage and gree  
 Off agit folk, with hedis hore and olde.  
 Zone were the folke that neur change wold  
 In lufe, but trewly seruit him alway  
 In every age unto thaire ending-day.'"

Now, in the *Court of Love* we find nearly the same enumeration. We have (1) the aged folk, described also

<sup>1</sup> Compare also st. 79 of the *Kingis Quair*, "aboue thaire hedis writin there I fand," etc., with st. 34 of the *Court of Love*.

<sup>2</sup> Tytler says, "I apprehend the poet has had the celebrated Tablature of Cebes in his view."

as "the folk in blew," the colour blue being used to denote their steadfastness in love :<sup>1</sup>

36. "Lo yonder folk, quoth she, that kneele in blew,  
They weare the colour aye and ever shalle,  
In sign they ever were and wille be trew  
Withouten chaunge";

(2) the "saints," by which are meant the martyrs for love :

18. "There saints have their comming and resort";

(3) the crowd that "ben in black," described thus :

37. "Yea than, quoth I, what done these prestes here,  
Nunnes and hermits freres and alle tho," etc.,

correspond to the "folk of religioun" in stanza 88 of the *Kingis Quair* :

- "And efter this upon zone stage adoun  
Tho that thou seis stand in capis wyde,  
Zone were quhilum folk of religioun  
That from the warld thaire gouernance did hide," etc.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> So used in Chaucer, *Troilus* iii., l. 885 :

"bereth him this blewe ring."

*Balade against Women unconstant* :

"In stede of blew, thus may ye were al grene."

*Anelida* ll. 330-32 :

"Clad in asure  
To profren eft a newe assure  
For to be trewe."

Azure = true blue.

<sup>2</sup> The author of the *Kingis Quair* has both expanded and curtailed certain details of the *Court of Love*, and in such instances, especially in his omissions, he shows himself to be decidedly the superior literary artist. There is a strain of coarseness in the *Court of Love*, e.g. in the particular description of Rosial (st. 112 to 114), but the *Kingis Quair* is limpidly pure throughout, in this respect reminding one of George Wither's *Philarete*.

Let the Court of Venus in the two poems be carefully compared, and I venture to say every unprejudiced person will be convinced that there is a relationship impossible to be explained away, and that the *Kingis Quair* is directly modelled on the *Court of Love*.<sup>1</sup>

One is not surprised to find Philogenet, "a clerk of Cambridge," being told that his birth and Rosial's are not equal, and that his ability may not compare with hers:

149. "Thy birth and hers they be nothing egale,"

and

150. "And eke remember thine abilitie

May not compare with her, this well thou wote";

but it is surely rather less fitting to find the same thing in the *Kingis Quair* said of a king and an earl's daughter. James is thus addressed by Venus:

109. "And zit considering the nakitnesse

Bothe of thy wit, thy persone and thy myght

It is no mach of thyne unworthynesse

To hir hie birth, estate and beautee bryght."

These must suffice for a few of the examples of imitation. Let me now briefly direct attention to other evidences of copying, which to some may appear as convincing as similarities in thought and diction and in the construction of the poems.

It will be remembered that I have directed attention to the use of the very uncommon word "balas" in both

<sup>1</sup>I quite expect that at first some readers will incline to regard certain things in both poems as "mediaeval commonplaces," but a critical examination will alter that view. The *sequence* of many of the imitations, once caught, is perfectly convincing. I am hopeful that note D, p. 84, will be found helpful.

poems. That single instance, I submit, would be of some value in deciding a question like the one we are at present discussing. But there are two others yet to be cited. The first relates to the word "smaragde," signifying "an emerald." In the *Court of Love* we find it used by the author in describing the lustre of Rosial's eyes. He says:

113. "And eke her eyen ben bright and orient  
As is the smaragde."

One is not surprised to find the editor of Bell's edition of Chaucer adding a note that "light green eyes would not be beautiful."<sup>1</sup> It is, I fancy, quite unnecessary to argue that point. Rosial, it will be remembered, is described as golden-haired. The poet was surely ignorant of the 'smaragde' being a green stone.

Come now to the *Kingis Quair*. What do we find in it? The author has used the same word in stanza 155:

"The lyoun king and his fere lyonesse,  
The pantere, like unto the smaragdyne."<sup>2</sup>

In an interesting note by Professor Skeat we read, "Tytler wonders how the panther could be like an emerald. The fact is, the poet follows the usual description in the old so-called 'Bestiaries,' or descriptions of beasts. Compare, for example, the *Bestiary* printed by Dr. Morris for the Early English Text Society; the *Bestiary of Philip de Thaun* in Anglo-French, printed in Mr. Wright's *Fopular*

<sup>1</sup>Tytler also annotated these lines in the *Court of Love* thus: "Smaragdus = an emerald. Eyes of emerald or green colour cannot be beautiful. Chaucer meant only to compare his mistress's eyes in brightness to the orient emerald. The simile, however, is not well chosen."

<sup>2</sup>Smaragdynes = smaragde, is a form found in *Du Cange*.

*Treatises on Science*; A. Neckam, *de Naturis Rerum*, ed. T. Wright; Solinus' *Polyhistor*, and the like. In a description of the panther in the *Codex Exoniensis*, ed. Thorpe, it is described as being of various colours, like *Joseph's coat*. In A. Golding's translation of Solinus (Lib. I., c. 26) it is said of panthers that 'the hayre of their skins . . . is either white or of a *skye colour*'; and Neckam (p. 214) says the same. I suspect that our author is confusing the colour of the emerald with that of the sky." That annotation proves conclusively enough that the panther was regarded as of "sky colour." Professor Skeat, however, failed to note that the author of the *Kingis Quair* keeps company with the author of the *Court of Love*, both authors being ignorant of the true colour of the "smaragde," and alike employing it as signifying *blue*.<sup>1</sup> They did not get the error from Chaucer, for he appears to have known the stone to be green in colour.<sup>2</sup>

The other instance I wish to direct attention to is a phrase found twice in the *Kingis Quair*, (1) in stanza 45:

"Quhen I a lytill thrawe had maid my moon  
Bewailing myn infortune and my chance,  
Unknawin how or quhat was best to doon  
So ferre I-fallyng into lufis dance,"

and again in stanza 185:

"And eke for tham that ar noght entrit inne  
The dance of lufe."

"Lufis dance" is thus annotated by Professor Skeat:

<sup>1</sup> Sky colour = vair, bluish-grey.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* Boethius, note p. 80 (Vol. II. *Chaucer*, Clarendon Press edition). The further fact that in the *Court of Love* and in the *Kingis Quair* both "emeraut" and "smaragde" are used, goes also to prove the authors' ignorance of the real nature of the smaragde.

"This curious expression occurs in Chaucer's *C. T.* 478: it is said of the Wife of Bath that she knew 'the olde daunce' of the art of love. It occurs again in *C. T.* 12013, and in *Troil.*, B. III., l. 696. Tyrwhitt explains it by 'game,' and remarks that the French have the same phrase, citing from Cotgrave (*s.v.* Danse) the expression, *Elle sçait assez de la vieille danse*,—the translation of which is to be found in l. 4300 of the *Romaunt of the Rose*—"For she knew al the olde daunce." Now, while Professor Skeat perfectly understood the phrase, and quite properly noted an analogous phrase made use of by Chaucer, he is in error in stating that the "curious" expressions, "Lufis dance" and the "dance of lufe," or either of them, occur in the Chaucerian passages cited by him.

In the "Wife of Bath" (Prologue *C. T.* 478) the line is,

"For she coude of that art the olde daunce";

in "The Phisiciens Tale" (*C. T.* 12013),

"And knowen wel y-nough the olde daunce";

while in *Troilus* (B. III., l. 695) it is,

"The olde daunce and every poynt ther-inne."

So also, as we have seen, is it in the *Romaunt of the Rose*. There is a difference, however, between "the olde daunce" and the phrase we are discussing, when the question is whence the author of the *Kingis Quair* derived it. Now I point out that the identical phrase occurs in the *Court of Love*:

"And falsely now they footen love's daunce

Barren of routh."

This coincidence, standing by no means alone, is but little weakened by the fact that the phrase "*love's daunce*,"

does once occur in Chaucer, although not in a passage<sup>1</sup> adverted to by Professor Skeat. For it must be correlated with many other things. We have the very unusual word "balas" employed by both authors; we find both authors wrongly employing "smaragde" in the same sense in their poems; while yet another phrase cited by Professor Skeat as "peculiar" is also found in the *Kingis Quair* and the *Court of Love*. That group of facts, taken in conjunction with affinities in thought, framework, and diction, amounts, I submit, to proof of the proposition that the Scottish author had the *Court of Love* in his view when composing the *Kingis Quair*. The data are simple and the inference is plain.

(c) AUTOBIOGRAPHY ON ITS TRIAL.

The third and last point of internal evidence to be discussed at present, relates to certain quasi-biographical facts mentioned in the poem. It will be all the clearer if we note the conflicting statements of Wyntoun and Bower about the capture of James, before examining a passage in Professor Skeat's Introduction.

In the *Cronykil* (B. ix., c. 15) under the year 1394, Wyntoun records the birth of James:

"Oure King Jamys in Scotland syne  
That yere wes borne in Dunfermline."

In chapter 25 he tells us that James, while voyaging to France, was taken prisoner by the English on Palm Sunday, 1405; and in the succeeding chapter (26) the death of Robert III. is recorded as having taken place

<sup>1</sup> *Troilus*, B. II., l. 1106: a passage pointed out to me, just on the eve of going to press, by Professor W. S. M'Cormick.

at Dundonald on the feast of St. Ambrose, 4th April, which synchronized with Palm Sunday in the year 1406.

In the *Scotichronicon*<sup>1</sup> Bower says that James was fourteen years of age before he set out on the voyage to France. He dates the capture specifically as 30th March, 1404, and states that Robert III. died of a broken heart soon after hearing of the prince's capture by the English.

It might be possible to suggest an explanation of these conflicting accounts, but to do so at present would lead to needless digression. It is enough to know now for certain that Wyntoun is right as regards both the birth year of James and the date of the death of Robert III. He and Bower, however, as we shall see presently, are wrong as to the year of the capture.

Let us now hear Professor Skeat. In the Introduction to the *Kingis Quair* (Scottish Text Society edition)<sup>2</sup> he says: "The facts of his (James's) life that immediately concern the reader of his chief poem may be briefly enumerated. He was born in July,<sup>3</sup> 1394, being the second son<sup>4</sup> of Robert III. and his queen, Annabella Drummond. The readers of Sir Walter Scott's *Fair Maid*

<sup>1</sup> B. 15, c. xviii.

<sup>2</sup> Introd., p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> The month cannot be stated with certainty. In a letter by Queen Annabella to Richard II., dated from the Abbey of Dunfermline in 1394, "le premier jour d'Auoust," she refers to her recent recovery—"Car nous estremez gisant malade d'enfant masquil, a nom James; et sommes bien et graciosment delivre, la grace de Dieu et de notre dame" (Brit. Mus. Vesp. F, f. 39, n. 1). It is copied in the Appendix to Pinkerton's *Hist. of Scotland*, edition 1797; and also in the *Nat. MSS. of Scotland*, Part II.

<sup>4</sup> A mistake. He was the third son; *vide* "The Genealogy of the Stewarts," *Exch. Rolls*, Vol. IV., App. clxxii.



of Perth will remember the sad story of the cruel death of James's elder brother, the Duke of Rothesay—a circumstance which determined the king to send his remaining son to France, ostensibly for education, but really with a view to his safety.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, in the month of March, 1405,<sup>2</sup> Sir David Fleming, the king's kinsman, conducted the young prince to the Bass Rock, in the Firth of Forth, there to await the ship from Leith which was to carry him to France. As Sir David Fleming was returning to Edinburgh, after taking leave of the prince, he was waylaid and slain.<sup>3</sup> Shortly afterwards the ship arrived, and the prince went on board with his tutors and companions. The ship was attacked by an English vessel off Flamborough Head in a time of truce,<sup>4</sup> and in defiance of all right and justice James was taken prisoner, carried to Henry IV. at Windsor,<sup>5</sup> and detained in England for many years. It is singular that the various accounts do not seem to be accurate in every particular. Thus Professor Morley speaks of the prince as being 'a boy of fourteen,'<sup>6</sup> when it is quite certain that his age in March, 1405, was ten years and about eight months.<sup>7</sup> Again, the date usually assigned for the prince's

<sup>1</sup> He was not sent to France for four years after David's death ; there is no real evidence for the statement in the text.

<sup>2</sup> A mistake : the year was 1406.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. J. H. Wylie is right in saying, " Early in February he was placed in charge of Sir David Fleming" (*Hist. of England under Henry IV.*, Vol. II., c. 61). Fleming's death took place in February, 1406 ; his son Malcolm received as heir-at-law a charter to Cumbernauld Castle on April 2, 1406 (*Id.*, c. 61).

<sup>4</sup> A mistake : the truce expired April 19, 1405, *vide note infra*.

<sup>5</sup> No evidence for this.

<sup>6</sup> Bower is the author of the statement.

<sup>7</sup> A mistake : *vide note infra*.

capture is the 12th of April, 1405, being Palm Sunday ; but in the *Annals of England*, 1876, p. 221, the date assigned is the 30th of March.<sup>1</sup> There is even a doubt as to whether the ship was attacked in the open sea or upon its venturing to approach the shore.<sup>2</sup> These are questions of some interest, because James himself has something to say regarding them. In stanza 22 he tells us he had passed 'the state of innocence,' *i.e.* seven years, by the number of three years, so that he was over ten years old. As to the date of his embarkation he is also explicit. In stanzas 21 and 22 he tells us that he 'took his adventure to pass by sea out of his country when the sun was beginning his course in Aries, and when it was four degrees past midday.' He probably here refers to his first brief experience of the sea in passing by boat from North Berwick to the Bass Rock, a circumstance which impressed his mind so vividly that he was able to remember years afterwards that he entered the boat at one o'clock on the 12th of March, being the day when the sun entered the sign of Aries. In stanza 23 he tells us that when the ship was purveyed with all necessaries, and when the wind was favourable, he and his companions entered the ship early in the morning, and after many farewells and expressions of good wishes for their safe journey from those whom they left behind, they pulled up sail and went forth upon their way. In stanza 24 he expressly says that his ship was attacked at sea and soon overpowered, so that he was taken prisoner by the strong hand, or, to speak it briefly, by force. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Wyntoun and Bower are the authors of the statements.

<sup>2</sup> Boyes suggested this in 1526 : there is no contemporary evidence.

I have already said that the poem of the *Kingis Quair*, that is, of the king's book, was composed in 1423.<sup>1</sup> I do not find that it has been observed that we can date it much more exactly than this. . . . I do not find that any one has noticed a curious expression in stanza 191. The lines to which I allude are the third and fourth of that stanza :

'Thankit mot be the sanctis marciall  
That me first causit hath this accident.'

For *marciall* the editions by Tytler and others have *merciall*, and there is no note upon the line; nor does the word appear in Thomson's glossary, so that this interesting point has been missed. The 'Martial Saints' are the saints of the month of Mars, *i.e.* of March; and the poet blesses all the saints of this happy month because it 'first caused him this accident,' *i.e.* was the original cause of his good fortune. I take this to refer, not to his first sight of the lady (which certainly took place in May, as we learn expressly from stanzas 34, 49, and 65), but to the month in which he first quitted his native land; and I think it highly probable that the recurrence of the 12th of March—the anniversary of the day when he first left home, and all his troubles began (see stanza 20)—caused him to turn his thoughts upon the events of his past life."

That narrative is certainly not what might have been expected from an editor writing in 1884, who considered it necessary to tell "the facts that immediately concern

<sup>1</sup> Professor Skeat, annotating st. 31, says, "the place described is the royal garden at Windsor." The story about James's courtship at that royal residence, however, is, to use a phrase of Rabelais, "a fib too fabulous" to be allowed to pass. *Vide* note E, App. p. 90.

the reader of his (James's) chief poem." Professor Skeat has evidently neither troubled himself with the chroniclers nor gathered his facts from the most recent and trustworthy biographers. He has told the story much as Tytler and the earlier editors did, never doubting the perfect agreement of the biography with the poem, and of the poem with the biography.

Now it will be admitted that if James the First was the author of the *Kingis Quair*, no one was so well able as he to tell us all about his capture and long captivity in England. He was present and privy to the things described. The biographical facts which we can test are the three made use of by Professor Skeat, viz.—the statements (1) in stanza 20, and (2) in stanza 22, and (3) the curious expression in stanza 191.<sup>1</sup>

Let us begin by quoting stanza 20 :

" In vere, that full of vertu is and gude  
 Quhen nature first begynneth hir emprise,  
 That quhilum was be cruell frost and flude  
 And schowirs scharp opprest in many wyse  
 And Synthius begynneth to aryse  
 Heigh in the est, a morrow soft and suete  
 Upward his course to driue in Ariete."

Plainly that intimates to us that when the voyage began

<sup>1</sup> The well-known line in stanza 187 :

"That from the deth hir man sche has defendit,"

referring to Joan, has often been quoted as prophetic. Professor Skeat says in a note, "By a singular coincidence it was literally true that she defended the king when he was being assassinated." Any divination in the words will be effectually eradicated if it be found that the poem was written *after* 1437. It is always pardonable to disbelieve in prophecy where one can elude its verification as such by ordinary interpretation.

the sun had entered Aries, which fixes March 11th as the earliest date. As one may read the verse, it suggests that the sun was not just beginning to enter Aries, but was already in it. There is, however, no need to insist on the point; 11th March is sufficient as a date fixed.<sup>1</sup>

Stanza 22 is as follows :

“Noght fer passit the state of Innocence  
 Bot nere about the nowmer of zeris thre  
 Was it causit throu hevinly influence  
 Off Goddis will or othir casualtee  
 Can I noght say bot out of my contree  
 By thair avise that had of me the cure  
 Be see to pas, tuke I myn auenture.”

Now, “nere about the nowmer of zeris thre” past “the state of Innocence” is not difficult to explain, for, in the technical language of the Civilians, a child who could not understand the import of what he did, was spoken of as still *infanti proximus*; but on entering his eighth year, being then considered to have *intellectus*, he was *pubertati proximus*.<sup>2</sup> The state of Innocence therefore means seven years of age, to which fall to be added “nere the nowmer

<sup>1</sup> Professor Skeat observes that in Chaucer's time, as shown in his treatise on the Astrolabe, the Vernal Equinox was 12th March; and that “four greis evin” mentioned in stanza 22, means “four degrees exactly = an hour past mid-day or 1 o'clock p.m.” Mr. W. Peck, City Observatory, Edinburgh, informs me that the Vernal Equinox in 1406 was 11th March, and that “four degrees past mid-day = 16 minutes past noon is apparent noon, as found from the sun, and according to the language of the fifteenth century.”

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* the Constitution of Theodosius (*Cod. Theod.*, viii. 18. 8). The period of infancy was fixed in accordance with the theory of physicians, who maintained that the human body underwent a marked change every seven years.

of zeris thre," thus making James "about ten years of age" at the date of his capture.

If again the reference to the "sanctis marciall" points to the month of March as the time of his capture—which, however, I doubt—we have three very definite statements indeed by which to test the poem.

Now, what are the facts? Wyntoun's statement that James was born in 1394 is confirmed by Queen Annabella's letter to Richard II., dated 1st August, 1394, which refers to the birth as having taken place shortly before that date.<sup>1</sup>

In the course of editing the *Exchequer Rolls*, Mr. George Burnett, Lyon King of Scotland, finding it difficult to make certain entries in the Scottish Public Registers agree with some of the statements of the historians, applied to Sir William Hardy, Deputy Keeper of the Records in London.<sup>2</sup> That distinguished archivist, after an exhaustive investigation regarding the date of the prince's capture, and the sums eventually paid towards his ransom, discovered that in *Foedera* (Vol. VIII., pp. 403 to 419) no fewer than fourteen documents had been placed by Rymer under 1405, although

See also *Ratis Raving*, Book I., ll. 1112 to 1150, where the "first age" is up to three; "the second" up to seven:

"The tother eild, I understand  
Is fra thre zer to vii lestand—  
. . . . .  
This eild is lycht and Innocent  
Suppos it want gud Jugment."

The "third age" is from the seventh to the fifteenth year:

"Than springis rutis of resone."

<sup>1</sup> *Vide note supra*, 49.

<sup>2</sup> *Exchequer Rolls*, Vol. IV., p. cxxxiv. and App. cciii.

belonging to a subsequent year. The errors in the *Foedera*, which had led so many modern historians astray, were detected by examining original documents of apparently similar date at different and distant places.<sup>1</sup> The result, so far as it concerns us at present, is that Wyntoun and Bower are both found to be wrong about the capture of James; the one in placing it among the events of 1404, the other of 1405. It is now known to have been in 1406, the date assigned by the contemporary English chronicler, Walsingham; and the capture does not seem to have taken place in the month of March.

Sir William Hardy's communication, so far as it bears on our subject, may be quoted. It is as follows: "I am at last able to say without possibility of contradiction, that the dates assigned by Rymer to the three documents in which the Earl of Orkney and his brothers are mentioned, viz. Aug. 19 and Sept. 13, 1405 (Vol. VIII., pp. 410-415), are indisputably wrong. The year in which these safe conducts were granted should be 1407 (8 Hen. IV.).

"The question appeared to be of such importance, that I hesitated (until thoroughly satisfied by a careful investigation of the original documents) to assert that more than a dozen of the entries cited by Rymer from the *Rotulus Viagii* as belonging to the 6th of Henry IV., really belong to the 8th year of that king's reign.

"The difficulties (see note in Pinkerton's *History of Scotland*, Vol. I., pp. 81 and 82)<sup>2</sup> which have arisen in consequence of Rymer's error in reconciling the conflicting

<sup>1</sup> Bain's *Calendar*, Vol. IV., Pref. xxx.

<sup>2</sup> Pinkerton remarks that "when the materials are so complex and discordant the candour of the reader must be requested" (p. 82).

authorities as to the date of the capture of the Earl of Carric (*i.e.* King James the First) by the English, and the death of Sir David Fleming, will be entirely removed by the rectification of the dates as above, and the accuracy of Walsingham's account (*Ypodigma Neustriae*, p. 418) will be fully established.<sup>1</sup>

"From all I have seen, I am inclined to believe that, according to the true date of the documents severally attested by the king, the capture of Prince James preceded only a very short time his father's death on 4th April, 1406.<sup>2</sup> Fleming's death should be placed probably about the middle of February, 1406 (O.S.): this would agree with the Scottish Exchequer account, in which you say he is represented as deceased in March, 1405-6. The prince's imprisonment in the Tower commenced, we may presume, at the end of February or early in March, 1406 (O.S.)."<sup>3</sup>

In the same interesting communication, Sir William Hardy gives a list of payments made to the Constable

<sup>1</sup> Two recent English historians, Sir James H. Ramsay and J. H. Wylie, discuss the point carefully. Ramsay says, "The Scots writers give the year as 1405, but this date is excluded by their own narratives, which show that the capture took place in the year following Northumberland's retreat into Scotland."—*Lancaster and York*, Vol. I., p. 97. Wylie says, "One point, however, may be taken as now fully established, viz. that the Scottish chroniclers, Wyntown and Bower, are wrong in placing the events in 1405, and that the English records are right when they assign them to the earlier months of 1406."—*History of England under Henry IV.*, Vol. II., ch. 61. Rapin correctly gives the year as 1406. The year is 1406 in Boyes; and also in the *Regist. Epis. Glasg.*, p. 316.

<sup>2</sup> *Exchequer Rolls*, *Ib.*, Pref.

<sup>3</sup> The letters O.S., used twice, should be deleted: they are manifestly a slip of the pen, as the whole context shows.



of the Tower "for the household of the King of Scotland," and concludes that from these "it may be inferred that the Constable of the Tower, Sir Thomas Rempston or his lieutenant, had the charge of the prince and other prisoners from an early day in March, 1406."

But we are able also by means of the amended *Foedera* to negative March, 1405, as the date of the capture. On Palm Sunday in the year 1405 a truce between England and Scotland came to an end.<sup>1</sup> Communications passed between the two Governments as to its renewal, but not a hint is found in any document of that year about the prince being a prisoner in England.<sup>2</sup> Such references in State papers commence in the early summer of 1406.<sup>3</sup> Again, in the year 1405<sup>4</sup> the Earl of Northumberland with his grandson Percy fled into Scotland after the rebellion in the North which ended with the battle of Shrewsbury. They found refuge at St. Andrews with Bishop Wardlaw, who had then charge of James, and the two youths were for a time educated together.<sup>5</sup> It

<sup>1</sup> It ended April 19, 1405. I agree with Sir James Ramsay in holding that at the time of James's capture in 1406 "there was no truce worthy of the name between England and Scotland." On 7th February, 1406, Henry empowered his envoys to negotiate "a real truce"; but nothing appears to have resulted. The point, however, is not free from doubt, looking to Walsingham's statement both in his *History* and the *Ypodigma* that a truce actually existed.

<sup>2</sup> "Yet it is singular that no mention of the Prince occurs in any writing of that year, *i.e.* 1405."—Pinkerton, p. 82.

<sup>3</sup> *Foedera*, ix.

<sup>4</sup> Northumberland arrived in June, 1405, a date as to which Walsingham is corroborated by the English records, and the period of his residence at St. Andrews must have intervened between that date and the prince's embarkation.—*Exchequer Rolls*, Vol. iv., Pref. xlii.

<sup>5</sup> *Scotichronicon*, B. xv., 18, 19.

is therefore absolutely impossible that the capture can have taken place in March, 1405.

When we test the poem in the light of these facts, what is the result? James at the time of his capture was not "nere the nowmer of zeris thre" past "the state of Innocence": he was eleven years and a half. His capture—according to the latest authorities—did not take place in the month of March but in February.<sup>1</sup> It is impossible that his voyage could have commenced on or after March 11th, seeing that he was safely lodged in the Tower of London in February, or, at latest, in the beginning of March.

How do the errors of Wyntoun come to be repeated in the *Kingis Quair*? Surely no one will believe James the First to have been capable of such biographical blunders. May we not say with Emerson that every man should be so much an artist that he could report in conversation what had befallen him?

Can it be that a chronicle has blossomed into the *Kingis Quair*? Is it possible for us to attain to that lofty sight, "where facts yield their secret sense and annals and poetry are alike?" Let us look closely at the *Origynale Cronykil* of Wyntoun,—finished sometime between 3rd September, 1420, and April, 1424—and compare some passages with the *Kingis Quair*. In the

<sup>1</sup>Mr. George Burnett says the same thing about February, but I have been unable to discover either his or Sir William Hardy's authority for that month, although I have diligently searched for it. They were both eminently cautious, and must have been satisfied that certain circumstances pointed to the capture having taken place in February.

*Cronykil* (B. IX., c. 25) we are told, when James set sail from the Bass, that

“he wes there purvait wele.”

In the *Kingis Quair* the same incident is referred to thus :

23. “Purvait of all that was us necessary.”

So again in the *Cronykil* we learn that Robert III. deliberated

“Be prevé counsale and ordinance”

to send the prince into France, and that he and his retinue

“In to that schip then maid entré  
In till intent to pas the sé.”

In the *Kingis Quair* the poet says :

“Out of my contree  
By thair avise that had of me the cure  
Be see to pas, tuke I myn aventure.”

Do we not seem to catch a glimpse of the poet—his elbow on the desk, the *Origynale Cronykil* open before him, selecting the few biographical facts needed to lend an air of reality to the good matter he had then in his heart to indite touching the Scottish king? Is it not remarkable to find the chronicler and the poet both falling into the same errors, and at the same time, on the only points where comparison is possible, using identical phrases? Book IX., chapter 25, of Wyntoun's *Cronykil* was certainly written years before James returned to Scotland:<sup>1</sup> surely no one will venture even to suggest, much less maintain, that James the First was dependent for his biography on the *Cronykil*!

<sup>1</sup> The chronicle was *finished* between 3rd September, 1420, and the return of James I. in April, 1424, as appears by Robert Duke of Albany being mentioned as dead, and the prayer for the prosperity of his children in B. IX., c. 26.—*Vide* Dr. David Laing's edition of Wyntoun (*Historians of Scotland*, Vol. II., Pref. xxxiv.).

## A REVIEW AND CONCLUSION.

OUR survey now is ended. Are we able by a process of exclusion and rejection to arrive at an inevitable conclusion? A verdict of Not Proven, with the jarring noise that usually follows, is undesirable and to be avoided if possible.

In coming to a decision, I venture to think the judgment of most men will be held captive, at the outset, by a certain prepossession for James. Among the bards he stands in the front rank—

“As in a globe of radiant fire and graced  
To be in that orb crowned, that doth include  
Those prophets of the former magnitude  
And he one chief.”

Primer and text book have taught us to regard him as “the best poet among kings and the best king among poets,” as “a royal poet on whose character royalty itself could scarcely confer any additional splendour,” and as “the agent who in all probability established the influence of Chaucer as predominant in the literature of his native land.” In compliment to him, the seven-line stanza employed in the *King's Quair*—although really Chaucerian—is now known as “the rime royal”; while the poem itself has been criticized as a work “full of simplicity and feeling, and not inferior in poetical merit to any similar production of Chaucer.” Nor can we forget how Rossetti in *The King's Tragedy*, one of the best of modern ballads, has worked up into weird beauty the sad story

of the tragic death of the king, weaving into it many verses of the *Kingis Quair*—"that lovely poem" as he calls it,

"More sweet than ever a poet's heart,  
Gave yet to the English tongue."

Not willingly therefore, having all these things in remembrance, will any one deprive James of his singing garment and reduce him to the humbler rank of a King of Scots. Yet that is what must happen if we decide that he did not write the *Kingis Quair*.

The encomiastic criticisms just quoted belong to comparatively recent times. They have been put forth quite regardless of the fact that the belated bequest which came by John Major has been slowly but surely proving a veritable *hereditas damnosa*. Both *Peebles to the Play* and *Christ's Kirk on the Green* are now relegated to the anonymous poetry of the sixteenth century—inexorably deposed by the internal evidence. *Yas sen*, notwithstanding Pinkerton's bold attempt at identification by "melting liquid letters, torturing mutes to make them speak, and making vowels dumb," is still unknown, and on the *Kingis Quair* alone, of all Major's *codices plurimi*, the poetical fame of James must now stand or fall. With that grave issue clearly before us, we shall now proceed to review very briefly the evidence adduced.

And first, it will be proper to glance at the case for James. It rests, so far as the historical evidence is concerned, practically on the Bodleian manuscript alone; for Professor Skeat, it will be remembered, has admitted the testimony of John Major, as regards the vernacular poems, to be "almost worthless at best," adding at the same time,

that "the wonder is that he is right about the *Kingis Quair* itself." But when we ask what is the internal evidence that makes for James being the author of the poem, it is not easy to furnish an answer. Reading the *Introduction* in the Scottish Text Society edition, one is forced to the conclusion that the editor, never having had a doubt about the authorship, has, instead of examining the evidence, affirmed from the beginning. Like the earlier editors, he begins with an epitome of the leading biographical facts concerning James. Aware that the prince's age at the time of his capture is stated differently by different biographers, he takes, without availing himself of the most recent historical criticism, the commonly accepted date, 1405. Finding it to accord with the statement in the poem that James was about ten years of age at the time, he then advances beyond any earlier editor, and boldly citing passages, "hitherto unobserved," to strengthen the autobiography, ventures even to suggest the very months of the year 1423 in which the poem was composed. Here are the passages: "I have already said that the poem of the *Kingis Quair*, that is, of the King's Book, was composed in 1423. I do not find that it has been observed that we can date it much more exactly than this. A careful study of the poem has led me to believe that it was probably not composed quite all at once; indeed a poem of 1379 lines must have occupied several days at least, and even at the rate of fifty lines a day would have taken up nearly a month. . . . It is further clear that the composition of the poem must have lasted into June, since after seeing the lady Joan in May he speaks of his hopes increasing 'day by day'

(st. 181), of his 'long pain and true service in love' (st. 188), which led to his love being reciprocated, of his 'long and true continuance in love and true service' (st. 192), and of his further success in love 'day by day' (st. 193). Indeed, if we are to take the words in the *literal* sense, we should have to allow even a still later date for the latter portion of the poem; but perhaps a month or six weeks may fairly be considered a long term of service to a lover who is anxious for the success of his suit."

It was surely such kind of deductive criticism that Montaigne had in his mind when he wrote—"Who will not say that glosses augment doubts and ignorance, since there's no one book to be found, either human or divine, which the world busies itself about whereof the difficulties are cleared by interpretation? The hundredth commentator passes it on to the next more knotty and perplexed than he found it."

When he proceeds to the criticism of the text, Professor Skeat tells us that he was startled to find James abandoning the grammar used in the Lowlands of Scotland, and attempting to imitate all the inflections of the Midland dialect of Chaucer. Clearly enough the instances of false accidentence perpetrated by the author in attempting to imitate Chaucer<sup>1</sup> did not suggest the contradiction which these implied of the statements of both English and Scottish

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* notes *supra*, pp. 21, 23, and 28. Professor Skeat cites the line in stanza 27,

"And I a man, and lakkith libertee,"

as a curious instance of confusion of grammar. "Lakkith," however, is not used here with the first personal pronoun, but *intransitively*, as in stanza 84. The poet is simply saying, "*Liberty is lacking.*"

chroniclers, that James while in captivity received the best education that England could then give. Neither can the tender age of the prince at the time of his capture have been sufficiently considered, else the presence of Northern dialect in the poem, and the subsidiary use of Midland speech, would surely have startled an editor who had properly taken his bearings. Or, if the use made of the Croydon charter is to be taken as showing that the editor did attempt to account for the Northern dialect in the poem, then, indeed, the very nature of the document itself, the age of the prince at the time it purported to be executed, and the circumstances attending the grant to Sir William Douglas, ought to have been sufficient to give pause before it was founded on as a voucher for James's ability to compose in the vernacular speech of Lowland Scotland.

So, too, as regards the Chaucerian imitations. These were obvious to Tytler, though he only troubled himself to note a few of them, leaving to later editors the completion of the list. They furnish no proof whatever for or against James as the author of the poem. But Tytler, as we saw, noted stanzas of the *Kingis Quair* modelled on the *Court of Love*. Like every critic of that time, he believed the *Court of Love* to be a genuine Chaucerian poem, and the discovery of imitated passages consequently pointed to no conclusion against James as the author. In the case of Professor Skeat it is very different. He knew that the *Court of Love* was not Chaucer's, and that it belonged to a time later than the age of James. But unfortunately he believed James to be the author of the *Kingis Quair*—a belief that evidently prevented him from



collating the poems and verifying the observation of the earliest editor. The consequence is, that the claim for the king rests solely on romantic as distinguished from historical criticism.

If we suppose our standpoint to be that of an editor coming now to weigh the evidence for the first time, is there any one so bold as to assert that James would be named as the author? The Bodleian manuscript—half a century at least later than the reign of James—breaks down altogether under fair and ordinary tests, its false ascriptions numbering at least one half of the whole. John Major—a sixteenth century historian, writing eighty-four years after the death of the king—is found in the very passage in which the *Kingis Quair* is attributed to James, to be indisputably untrustworthy about the other vernacular poems. But the historical evidence must also take account of Walter Bower, William Dunbar, and Sir David Lindsay. Bower, the sole contemporary, and for that reason, in a strict sense, the only competent witness, must be held to be against James. In the minutely particular description, he has attributed to the king more “virtues” than any one man ever possessed—many of them insignificant enough, taken alone—yet, although taking care to preserve a specimen of Latin versification, he nowhere suggests that James wrote vernacular poetry. So too, Dunbar, in a deliberate survey of the whole field of Scottish poetry, omits all mention of the ancestor of his patron, James the Fourth: while Lindsay—who had lauded James V. as a poet—in a poem that certainly gave him the opportunity of naming James the First in company with the eight makars singled out for praise, is also silent. The plain inference

surely is that Bower, Dunbar, and Lindsay were not aware that James the First had written vernacular poetry. They are to be regarded as witnesses—qualified to speak with authority—who in giving evidence have significantly testified against the king by omitting all mention of his name as a Scottish makar.

When we come to the *Kingis Quair* itself, and find it in part modelled on the *Court of Love*—a poem written not earlier than 1440—what is there to be said? Some of the passages have been quoted; so too we have pointed out the tell-tale error in both poems concerning the “smaragde,” and the use of the uncommon word “balas”; but the question at issue, viz. Had the author of the *Kingis Quair* the *Court of Love* in his view?—is one of fact to be determined by a jury of wise men: the opinion of one man, I am well aware, cannot decide it. If it be answered affirmatively, an inevitable conclusion will have been reached.

The remaining questions—the dialect, and the biography in the poem—are less complex. Indeed, to a mind of ordinary sagacity, neither presents much difficulty. The dialect and the biographical facts which condition it have already been discussed in considering the case for James assumed by Professor Skeat. But it must not be overlooked that if we find the *Kingis Quair* to be partly modelled on the *Court of Love*, then the former poem at once becomes one of the group of Scottish poems exhibiting the same artificial dialect, written between 1440 and 1480, when there was a vogue among Scottish poets to engraft Midland inflections on the Northern dialect. Such reconciling criticism, besides, will go far to explain away

the paradox of a poem—unquestionably marked by many puzzling and conflicting characteristics of grammar and dialect—failing so utterly to conform to the admitted tests of language devised by philology for the period to which hitherto, without due examination of its credentials, it has been supposed to belong.<sup>1</sup>

Coming now to the biography, or rather the autobiography—for it must be tested as such—plainly in the poem, we are told that James was about ten years of age when captured by the English; that his voyage began on or after 11th March; that he was taken prisoner in that month; and that his captivity endured for eighteen years. These facts accord with Wyntoun's *Cronykil*, and between the poem and the chronicle there is verbal agreement in passages referring to the same incidents, pointing to the chronicle—the earlier in date—having been consulted by the poet. The bare suggestion that James should have required to refer to a chronicle for biographical facts is of itself sufficiently ludicrous. But when we find that poem and chronicle are both alike wrong in fact—that James was not ten but eleven and a half years old when captured, and that his voyage was probably ended and himself in the Tower of London before 11th March—the question assumes another aspect. To be able to show that the biographical incidents are copied, as regards the diction, from the *Cronykil*, goes far to prove that James was not the author; when, however, we destroy the poem altogether as an autobiographical document, it is surely as near to demonstration as we could ever hope to attain

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Note C, App. p. 81.

by interrogating circumstances after the lapse of well-nigh five centuries.

In setting out to review the evidence, I referred to the predilection that most men might be expected to have for the poet-king. As a closing word, however, it seems well to point out that the question we are considering, so far as it concerns James's right to rank among the national poets, is really of secondary importance. The main question is whether the *Kingis Quair* was written in the first quarter of the fifteenth century or at a later time. If it be found to belong to the second half of that century—as I believe it will—then we shall also have discovered what is of great importance, namely, that hitherto in the criticism of the poetical literature of the period between the time of Chaucer and the advent of our Scottish Spenser, Robert Henryson, the literary compass has been seriously deflected. A true adjustment of the needle may perhaps not lead to new discoveries speedily and suddenly, but to the future voyager it will at least give hope, the best incentive to continued investigation. Emancipation from error is the condition of all progress.

## NOTE A.

## THE BODLEIAN MS., ARCH. SELD. B. 24.

Many readers, I believe, will be glad to have an epitome of the contents of the Bodleian MS., so well known by its catalogue reference, Arch. Selden B. 24. The transcript, which I obtained through the kindness of the Rev. W. D. Macray of the Bodleian Library, was made for me by Miss Angelina F. Parker, 39 Wellington Square, Oxford, who also most obligingly sent me a tracing of the Gaelic lines occurring on folio 231 and a drawing of the shield emblazoned on fol. 118 at the end of the *Troilus*. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the services of one who has been so very helpful.

In the case of the longer poems in the MS., the first and last lines are noted: where the piece consists of one verse, the first line only is given. In every instance the colophon is copied as it appears in the MS. The asterisk denotes the reference "folio-verso." I have also given, at the end of the contents, certain memoranda made by early owners of the MS. Generally speaking, such jottings are scornfully referred to by editors of early texts as "idle scribblings," and, being despised, are rarely noted at all in the printed volume. In tracing the pedigree of a MS., however, such "scribblings" may easily come to be of the greatest value, and in every case they ought, in my opinion, to accompany a critical text, even if they be relegated to the last page and be there printed only in diamond italics.

The volume most probably belonged at one time to the Sinclairs of Roslin, judging from the note on folio 230, "liber Henricii Dmi. Sinclair," and the signatures, Maurius, Laurence, Maluin, and Elizabeth Sinclair. With a little trouble, I dare say, one might identify all the individuals, but I have not leisure to make the attempt at present.

In the MS. at folio 118 there is a Norman-shaped shield (displaying, I believe, the arms of some West Highland or

Hebridean family), which Miss Parker thus describes : Azure quarterly, first and fourth in bordure or, each bearing a galley or, with sail argent displayed, second and third each a galley or, with sails argent unfurled, shield in fesse or, in bordure and cross paté sable.

Under two lines of Gaelic, written in Old Irish character, on folio 231, there occurs the signature, "Mig Domnall Gorm." I take it to designate the Laird of Sleat, who, on 21st July, 1614, obtained confirmation of a charter of lands in Benbecula containing the curious clause, "proviso quod castrum de Camys semper pateret regi regisque locum-tenentibus, et camerariis : proviso quod dicte 40 solidate nullo pacto disponderentur hominibus insulanis *lie hielandmen* nisi prius dicto Don. oblate essent" (*Reg. Mag. Sig.* 1609-1620, No. 1087 ; also Vol. XIII. (1622-35) of the *Privy Council Registers*).

The signature or inscription, "Channois, 1592," may also indicate that the MS. was for a time in France ; but judging from the bucolic memoranda on the margin at folio 229, in which occur the words, "the 4 day of May Threscor and ten," the volume was in Scotland in 1570.

In an interesting letter which appeared in the *Athenaeum* of 28th December, 1895, Mr. Mark Liddell called attention to the memorandum on folio 119.<sup>1</sup> After pointing out that the MS. must have been written subsequent to 1488, he adds that "this entry furnishes direct evidence as to the time and place of the birth of James IV., the date of which has been variously stated (see *Accounts of the L. H. Treasurer of Scotland*, i. p. xlv. note)." To Mr. Liddell belongs the honour of the discovery of John Walton as the author of the little poem on folio 119,

"Richt as pouert causith sobirness."

The lines occur as part of the Prologue (vv. 83-90) to Walton's translation of Boethius' *de Consolatione*.

The manuscript appears to have been written by three scribes, thus : (a) folios 1-191 ; (b) folios 192-209 (but query) ; (c) folios 209\*-228\* ; (d) folios 229 and 229\* in hand (b) ; (e) folios 230-231 in hand (c).

<sup>1</sup> See note *supra*, p. 5.

The *Parliament of Fowls* in this MS. omits lines 601 to the end, and inserts an ending of its own. Against these verses is written in pencil, "Fresh, unique ending, spurious, F"—the note probably being Dr. Furnivall's.

Fol. 1.        The double sorowe of Troylus to tellen  
               That was the king Priamus sone of Troye <sup>1</sup>  
               . . . . .

Fol. 118\*. Here endeth the book of Troylus of double sorowe in  
               loving of Cris. . . .

[An heraldic shield is emblazoned here: vide  
               *prefatory note.*]

Blak be thy bandis and thy wedes  
 Thou sorowfull book of mater diseparit  
 In tokenying of thyne inward mortall wo  
 Quhiche is so bad that may not nought bene enparit  
 Thou oughtest neuer outward bene enfarit  
 That hast within so many a soroufull cl. . . .  
 Suich be thyne habyte as thou hast thy . . . <sup>2</sup>

Fol. 119.    Flee from the press and duell with suthfastness  
               . . . . .  
               Explicit Chauceres counsailing.

<sup>1</sup> There is no heading in the MS. to this poem of Troilus and Criseyde. Several of the pages have beautifully illuminated borders and capital letters. There are a great many marginal notes, mostly in different hands from the text.

<sup>2</sup> Who is the author of this verse? At folio 33\*, *Troilus*, Book II., l. 1274, under "thornes" in the text is written "thorne" by another hand. At the head of many of the pages, the number of the book is given "liber primus," "liber secundus," etc. There are very few corrections in the text of this or any of the other poems in the MS.

- Fol. 119. Richt as pouert causith sobirness.  
 . . . . .  
*Quod* Chaucere.
- Fol. 119\*. Deuse prowes and eke humylitee  
 . . . . .
- Fol. 120. *Quod* Chaucere quhen he was ryght ausit.  
 Nativitas principis nostri Jacobi quarti anno domini M<sup>mo</sup>  
 iiij<sup>c</sup> lxxij<sup>o</sup> xvij die mensis marcij *videlicet* in festo sancti  
 Patricij confessoris, In monasterio *sancle* crucis prope Edin-  
 burgh.
- 
- Fol. 120\*. In Maye quhan Flora the fresche lusty quene  
 . . . . .
- Fol. 129\*. Here endith the maying and disport of Chaucere.
- 
- Fol. 130. Moder of god and virgyne undefouled  
 Fol. 131\*. *Explicit oracio* Galfridi Chaucere.
- 
- Fol. 132. Gladith ze foules of the morow gay.  
 . . . . .
- Fol. 134. And god geue euery wight Joy of his make.  
 The compleynt of Mars  
 The ordour of compleynt requirith skilfully  
 . . . . .
- Fol. 136. Kithith therfor to hir sum kyndness.
- 
- Fol. 136. The compleynt of *Venus* folowith.  
 There nys none so hie confort to my plesance  
 . . . . .
- Fol. 137. Off Graunsoun the best that makith france  
*Quod* Galfridus Chaucere.
- 
- Fol. 137\*. Oh hie Emperice and quene celestial  
 . . . . .
- Fol. 138. Eternaly abufe all erdly wicht  
*Quod* Chaucere.





- Fol. 177.            Now mote I seyne the exiling of kingis  
                          .            .            .            .            .
- Fol. 180.        Here endis the legend of Luces.  
                          \_\_\_\_\_
- Fol. 180.            Juge Infernall Mynos of Crete King  
                          .            .            .            .            .
- Fol. 185.        Here endis the legend of Adriane.  
                          \_\_\_\_\_
- Fol. 185.            Thou gevarz of the formes that has wrought  
                          .            .            .            .            .
- Fol. 187\*.        Here endis the legend of Proigen and Philomene.  
                          \_\_\_\_\_
- Fol. 187.            I proue as wele as by autoritee  
                          .            .            .            .            .
- Fol. 191\*.        This tale is seid to this conclusion  
                          And thus ended Chaucere the legendis of ladyis.  
                          \_\_\_\_\_
- Fol. 191.        Heirefter followis the quair Maid be King James of  
                          scotland ye first callit ye Kingis quair and Maid quhen his  
                          Ma. wes in Ingland.
- Fol. 192.            Heigh in the hevymis figure circulere  
                          The rody sterres twynklyng as the fyre  
                          .            .            .            .            .
- Fol. 211.            And eke thair saulis vnto ye bliss of hevin  
                          Amen.  
                          Explicit, etc. etc. etc.
- Quod Jacobus primus scotorum rex Illustrissimus.  
                          \_\_\_\_\_
- Fol. 211\*.        Cupido vnto quhois commandement  
                          .            .            .            .            .
- Fol. 217.            A thousand foure hundreth and secund, etc.  
                          Explicit, etc.  
                          \_\_\_\_\_
- Fol. 217.            Befor my deth this lay of sorow I sing  
                          .            .            .            .            .
- Fol. 219.            Of fair langage to all ye worldis ere.  
                          Explicit, etc.

- Fol. 219. Because that teres weymenting and playntee  
 . . . . .
- Fol. 220. I will proceed thareof to the endite.  
 Explicit Prologus.
- Fol. 220. Quho may compleyne my langoure and distress.  
 . . . . .
- Fol. 221\*. Here endis the lufaris complaynt, etc.
- 
- Fol. 221\*. Hare beginnith ye quare of Jelusy.  
 Arise ze gudely folkis and see  
 This lusty man the quhich all tender flouris.  
 . . . . .
- Fol. 225. Heireeftir folowis the treti In the reprefe of Jelousye,  
 The passing Clerk the grete philosopoure.  
 . . . . .
- Fol. 228\*. In body and soule eternaly mot Duell.  
 Explicit *quod* Auchē.<sup>1</sup> . . .
- 
- Fol. 229. My frende gif thou will be a *seruitur*.  
 . . . . .
- Fol. 229\*. Quho lefte here Craftis. . . .  
 (E)plicit.
- 
- Fol. 229\*. Man be als mery as th . . [One and a half verses.]  
 And lat *nouȝt* many . . .
- 
- Fol. 230. . . . . a hors of gold yow.<sup>2</sup> . .  
 . . . . . I suffir panes sare  
 . . . . . sweit hart . . .  
 . . . . .  
 O lady faire in quhom is myn e. . . .
- Fol. 231. Hef piete of me catif bound and thrall.

<sup>1</sup>Supposed to indicate James Auchinleck (Scotice, Affleck), one of the makars named in Dunbar's *Lament*.

<sup>2</sup>This poem is in a later hand, very badly written and illegible in places.

The words

" . . . hors of gold yow go,  
 Half pite of me catif bound and thrall "

precede these lines and are deleted in the MS.

## NOTES ON THE MS.

The following signatures and notes occur in the manuscript, each in a different handwriting :

Fol. 79, "Maurius Synclar." Fol. 155, "By me Edward Walker." Fol. 229, "Agnes Findlason \* w<sup>t</sup> my hand"; "Mr. John Duncan w<sup>t</sup> my hand"; "A Findlason \*" (same hand). Fol. 230, "Williame . . . ."; "be me patrik sckiner"; "Villam Lord (?)"; "Be me Donald . . . ."; "liber Henricii dmi Sinclar."; "Omnibus hanc cartam, viz." (*repeated four times*), "Be me Laurence Sincla . . . . Gif that in Wertew . . . . ow ta . . . ."

There are several other signatures on folio 230, but they are all illegible. One looks like "Maluin Sin . . . ." Another is "James, James (?)." "domine dominus noster quem admir . . . est . . . ." On folio 231, "Villem Crisseance is me name." "Elezebeth synclar within. . . ." On folio 231, ". . . send . . . saulle to ane guid end O Lord." "Jeff (?) Sinclar": then follow two lines in Gaelic with the signature "Mig Domnall Gorm." On the same page in a large hand, "Channois 1592" (or *Chaunois*). On folio 229 is this note in the margin: Vpone the sext day of May . . . Villiam Latt . . . Jhone quhyt . . . akre and Villiam brasbine . . . In the 3 croft fald. Vpone the seuenth day of June pryst be Jeames . . . patrik chapmane and Jhone chapman. . . . In the third croftfald . . . Vpon the acht day off May prist be Jhone Gib patrick chapmane and Jeames. . . . In the third cropfald fyv . . . Item 40 heid off catell upone the 15 day off May. Iteme upon the 4 day of maij Threscor and ten, Ine the lach . . . and the third cropfald Villame smyth and . . . and ane stirk\* off four zeiris old acht nicht. In the hender end of maij and the beg . . . off June upone the sext day of June In my third crop fald a . . . scoir sheip. (This note is very badly written, and illegible in places.)

## NOTE B.

## JOHN MAJOR'S TESTIMONY.

"In vernacula lingua artificiosissimus compositor: cujus codices plurimi et cantilenae memoriter adhuc apud Scotos inter primos habentur. Artificiosum libellum de regina dum captivus erat composuit, antequam eam in conjugem duceret: et aliam artificiosam cantilenam ejusdem, *Yas sen* etc. et jucundum artificiosumque illum cantum *At Beltayn* etc. quem alii de Dalketh et Gargeil mutare studuerunt: quia in arce aut camera clausus servabatur in qua mulier cum matre habitabat."—Major, *De Gestis Scotorum*, fol. cxxxv. Paris, 1521.

Mr. Archibald Constable translates the passage thus: "When he wrote the language of his own country he showed the utmost ability of that sort. He left behind him many writings and songs, which are to this day remembered amongst the Scots, and reckoned to be the best they have. He wrote an ingenious little book about the queen while he was yet in captivity and before his marriage, and likewise another ingenious ditty of the same kind, *Yas sen*, etc., and that pleasant and ingenious poem *At Beltayn*, etc., upon which other writers of Dalkeith and Gargeil laid themselves out to make some change,—because he was at that time kept a prisoner in the castle, where the lady dwelt with her mother, or even in his own chamber."—*History of Greater Britain*, by John Major, Scot. Hist. Society, Vol. x., p. 366.

§ 1. My translation of the same passage at pp. 11, 12, may be compared with Mr. Constable's; between the two there is essential agreement. The one point of difficulty is in the rendering of the words *quem alii de Dalketh et Gargeil mutare studuerunt*. Mr. Constable's version, *supra*, and my own—"which certain persons of Dalkeith and Gargeil have tried to alter"—have this to recommend them, that each takes the words *mutare studuerunt* in their primary sense.

Following Sibbald (*Chron. of Scot. Poetry*, Vol. I., p. 137, note), Professor Skeat renders *mutare* as 'to parody,' which is rather more a secondary sense of the word. But I am not prepared to maintain that one of the translations is preferable to another: every translator will please himself.

§ 2. In arguing against *Peebles to the Play* as a poem by James I., Sibbald quoted the passage in Major, and interpreted it in such a way as to show that he entirely misapprehended its meaning. His mistake arose through his failure to note the parenthetical nature of the sentence. He says (*Chron. ib.*), "From this" [*i.e.* the passage in Major] "we may gather that the subject of the poem, *At Beltayn*, was the *confinement* of a person, otherwise there would not have been that correspondence between the original and the parodies which Major particularly specifies. The occasion or subject of the parodies, he seems to say, was *by reason of his having been shut up in a tower or chamber in which a woman resided with her mother.*" Professor Skeat differs from Sibbald; but in avoiding Scylla, he goes straight for Charybdis. In the introduction to the *Kingis Quair* (p. 19) he says: "Now, the testimony of Mair tells almost as much *against* the authenticity of this poem (*i.e.* *Peebles to the Play*) as in its favour. James's poem, he says, was not to be got at, but was kept somewhere in safe custody; on which account others of 'Dalketh and Gargeil' endeavoured to write substitutes for it, and, of course, would begin with the two words by which it seems to have been known. This is what I understand by Mair's remark, taking *cantus* as the implied nominative case to *servabatur*, in opposition to Sibbald's remark that 'the occasion or subject of the parodies was *by reason of his having been shut up in a tower or chamber in which a woman resided with her mother.*'"

When the whole passage is read carefully, there can be no difficulty about the meaning. Major, in short, is telling us that James, before his marriage and while in captivity, wrote certain vernacular poems *while immured in the castle where Joan dwelt with her mother.* To read the passage either as

Sibbald or Professor Skeat does is to reduce it to absolute nonsense.

§ 3. One wonders if Major's meaning as regards the words *quem alii de Dalketh et Gargeil mutare studuerunt* may not be that certain persons endeavoured to make the *At Beltayn* poem relate to Dalkeith and Gargeil. The only Gargeil I have been able to discover is a small estate in Stirlingshire which belonged in the fifteenth century to a branch of the Drummond family (abstract of the Stirling Protocols: *Northern Notes and Queries*, January, 1896), but it does not seem to me likely to be the place indicated. If, however, we regard *Gargeil* as one of the numerous typographical errors in Major's *History*, and read *Cargill*, we find a certain connection between that place and Beltane ceremonies. In Jamieson's *Dictionary*, *voce* Beltane, there occurs the note: "A curious monument of the worship of the heavenly bodies still remains in the parish of Cargill, Perthshire. Near the village of Cargill may be seen erect stones of considerable magnitude, having the figure of the moon and stars cut on them, and which are probably the rude remains of pagan superstition. The corn field where these stones stand is called the moon-shade to this day (*Statistical Account*, 1793, Vol. XIII., 536, note)." In Perthshire the Beltane merrymakings continued down to a comparatively recent date. This, however, does not help to an understanding of the reference to Dalkeith. I frankly confess that the words are meaningless to me, whether the reference be to persons or to places.

## NOTE C.

ON THE DIALECT AND GRAMMAR OF THE  
*KINGIS QUAIR.*

In discussing the diction of the *Kingis Quair*, reference was made to the group of Scottish poems that exhibit the strange admixture of Northern and Midland dialect. I selected as specimens *The Romaunt of the Rose* (Fragment B), *The Court of Love*, and *Lancelot of the Lak*; but it may be well to direct special attention to a poem of 607 lines found in the Bodleian MS., Arch. Seld. B. 24, folio 221, viz.: *The Quare of Felusy*. The colophon ascribes it to "James Auchē . . .", the latter portion of the name of the author unfortunately being illegible. For more than half a century it has been accepted as a work of James Auchinleck (*Scottice Affleck*), one of the poets referred to in Dunbar's *Lament for the Makars*—

"That scorpion fell has done infek  
Maister Johne Clerk and James Afflek  
Fra ballat making and tragedie  
Timor mortis conturbat me."

Affleck is identified with James Auchlek, a licentiate or graduate of Glasgow University in 1471, who became "secretar to the Earl of Rosse." He is referred to in the Privy Seal Register as dead about September, 1497. The point is that he flourished in the second half of the fifteenth century.

When the poem is examined we find :

1. That the dialect employed is substantially the same as that of the *Kingis Quair*. The suggestion of artificiality is indeed far stronger in the *Quare of Felusy* than in the *Kingis Quair*. (a) There are infinitives in *yn*, e.g. *enduryyn*, *lakyn*, *chesyn*, *drinkyn*, *pleasyn*, *syttyn*, answering exactly to the occasional infinitive in *en* in the *Kingis Quair*: there are participles galore like *y'brocht*, *y'wrocht*, *y'slawe*, *y'marterit*, *y'brent*, etc.



2. That the so-called Chaucerian inflexions, supposed by Professor Skeat to require the sounding of final *e* in the *Kingis Quair*, are also in the *Quare of Felusy*. I select a few specimen lines from the latter poem, italicizing words on all fours with those for which, in the *Kingis Quair*, Professor Skeat postulates, for scansion, a final *e*:

- Line 17. "Bot walking furth vpoun the *new* grene."  
 „ 63. "So sudaynly vnder zour *strong* lowe."  
 „ 67. "The *scharp* deth mote perce me throughe the hert."  
 „ 101. "To *sene* from hir lusty eyne auaille."  
 „ 119. "Quhich to my *hert* sat full very nere."  
 „ 138. "Quhich fynd in to his cherlich *hert* mycht."  
 „ 250. "Now all hath fele of *thilke* poyson."  
 „ 300. "For as we may in *old* bukis fynd."  
 „ 533. "O *nyce* foole, thine owin harm for to schew."

I have purposely selected instances of the use of identical words singled out for comment by Professor Skeat in his introduction to the *Kingis Quair*, pp. xxvii.-xxxi.

I content myself with simply calling attention to the fact that there is here also perfect agreement between the *Kingis Quair* and the *Quare of Felusy*. On the *e* test, the correspondence between this poem and the *Kingis Quair* appears to be absolute.

3. That the *e* syllable in the middle of a word is also found, *e.g.*  
 Line 428. "Efter his deth he come to *fugement*."=(judg-e-ment.)  
 „ 520. "Rest nor quyet *treuly* to conclude."=(treu-e-ly.)

4. That *is* and the less common *es* sometimes form distinct syllables, *e.g.*

- Line 21. "Makith his course down by a *woddis* syde."  
 „ 185. "And of my *termes* and my rude endite."

5. That participles in *ing* abound, and the verbs in the

3rd person pres. ind. end usually in *th* and *ith*, as distinguished from the Northern *is* and *s*.

6. That (a) the article *ane* is found before a consonant; (b) participles in *it* abound; (c) the pronouns *thaim* and *thair* are used, never *hem* or *hir*; (d) the verb *to do* is employed in the strong conjugation; (e) *ne*=*not* and *nor*, is frequent; (f) one remarks the word *tone* also found in *Lancelot of the Lak*; (g) the rimes are, I believe, Northern rimes throughout, and mostly after the Northern fashion of ignoring the final *e*. Words are rimed which Chaucer never admitted.

The *Quare of Felusy* is printed in the *Bannatyne Miscellany*, Vol. II., p. 161 (Bannatyne Club), from a transcription made by Dr. David Laing, and being thus easily accessible, the critic who is interested in the dialect can read it for himself and compare it with the *Kingis Quair*.

If the *Kingis Quair* standing alone present anomalies in dialect and grammar, these without doubt become much less unintelligible when found elsewhere. The vogue of imitation in fifteenth century Scottish literature, seen somewhat at large in *The Romaunt of the Rose*, *The Court of Love*, and *Lancelot of the Lak*, comes out very strongly and very closely alongside the *Kingis Quair*, in a poem like the *Quare of Felusy*. The latter poem contains admirable illustrations of almost every seeming specialty of dialect and grammar commented on by Professor Skeat as virtually peculiar to the *Kingis Quair*. The whole stress of his editing was expended on the resuscitation of a putative buried *e*. But the very phenomena which by that method he sought to explain, have to be explained also in the *Quare of Felusy*. And not one but many such coincidences in grammar and diction are in like case. They have not been explained by analogies from the early post-Chaucerian age, nor will they be understood except by a rectified literary chronology of the whole cycle.

NOTE D.  
THE "COURT OF LOVE" AND THE "KINGIS QUAIR."

STANZA OF K. Q.	"KINGIS QUAIR" : compare with	STANZA OF C. OF L.	"COURT OF LOVE."
1 to 41	<i>Vide</i> stanza 17, "Help Calyope." The mythological <i>personae</i> in both poems may be noted gener- ally.	3	Calliope.
42	"Ar ye a worldly creature" : "or heavinly thing"?	118	"She seemed lich a thing celestial."
46 to 50	Joan is described.	116 to 119	Rosial is described. <i>Vide</i> also stanza 12.

STANZA OF K. Q.	"KINGIS QUAIR": compare with	STANZA OF C. OF L.	"COURT OF LOVE."
51	"thir versis sevin," <i>i.e.</i> st. 52. The Scottish poet sums all in the one stanza of seven lines. Compare the two closing lines with the closing lines of stanza 129 of the <i>Court of Love</i> .	120 to 129	Philogenet's "bille" consists of <i>seven</i> stanzas. Note that stanza 128 does not fit the theme of the <i>Kingis Quair</i> , James being in ward and unable to hold converse with any one. This renders it necessary for the Scottish poet to make James visit the Court of Venus in a trance, and accounts for many differences in the handling of the themes of the two poems.
53 to 77	These are much reminiscent of Chaucerian poems.		
78 to 82	The groups of lovers are described : (1) Lovers with hoary heads, (2) young lovers, (3) people with wide capes with hoods hanging over their eyes, (4) a world of folk with discontented looks. The <i>personae</i> are quite different from any in the Chaucerian poems.		

STANZA OF K. Q.	"KINGIS QUAIR" : compare with	STANZA OF C. OF L.	"COURT OF LOVE."
83 to 85	The first group (the agit folk) were those who throughout life had been true to Venus : in the same company are the true warriors and poets.	16 18 34 36	"And agit eke," etc. There saints, etc. ; saints = martyrs for love. Many a prince, etc. Lo Yonder Folk, etc. Blue is the colour of steadfastness.
86 to 87	The second group (zonge folkes) are those who died in middle age from divers causes : some because bereft of their love, some in arms for their lady's sake, some of despair, some for desire, some for despite, etc.	16	Young men fele came forth.
88 and 89	The third group (the religious folk), false to their vows of chastity.	37 157	Yea than quoth I what do these prestes here, etc. "This is the Court of lusty folk and gladde," etc. <i>Note.</i> —With good taste the Scottish poet compresses here, and also pawkily adds point to the passage about the false priests.

STANZA OF K. Q.	"KINGS QUAIR": compare with	STANZA OF C. OF L.	"COURT OF LOVE."
90 to 93	<p>The fourth group are the young people who were forced by their friends to enter the Cloister, or were married to those they did not love, or happily wed but bereft of their partner.</p> <p><i>Note.</i>—The Scottish poet undoubtedly has many touches all his own. The young folks may very easily have been suggested by the aged folks: that group at any rate is not copied from the <i>Court of Love</i>. Then again, in the fourth group, the unhappily wed and the happily wed are original. But as regards (1) the first group, (2) the third group, and (3) the first half of the fourth group, they are direct imitations of the <i>Court of Love</i>.</p>	159 163 164	<p>For Venus wot, etc. Our friends wick in tendir youth, etc.</p>
94 to 98	Reminiscent of Chaucer frequently.		
99 to 103	Compare "Hye Quene of Lufe," etc.	90 91 93	<p>Where Philogenet bethinks him of his "orisoun." Fairest of alle, etc., to Be merciable with thy fire of grace.</p>

STANZA OF K. Q.	"KINGIS QUAIR" : compare with	STANZA OF C. OF L.	"COURT OF LOVE"
104	The necessity for different handling of the theme is again noticeable here; but note that while at the end of stanza 93 of the <i>Court of Love</i> the description of Rosal begins, in the <i>Kingis Quair</i> the goddess is described.	93 94	Note the "crystal eyes" of the Goddess in the <i>Kingis Quair</i> , and also of Rosal in the <i>Court of Love</i> .
105 to 108	The construction of the poem is here necessarily quite different from the <i>Court of Love</i> .		
109 to 124	Many Chaucerian imitations. Compare with	151 147	Compare with Goodhope in the <i>Kingis Quair</i> . Goth on she said, etc.
133	Compare Minerva with	3	

STANZA OF K. Q.	"KING'S QUAIR": compare with	STANZA OF C. OF L.	"COURT OF LOVE."
134 139 to 142 143 151	Compare Hypocrisy. Compare with "als straught as ony lyne."	175 96 to 98 99 113	Avaunter.  "straight and even as line"; <i>vide</i> also 20, "straight of line."
166 to 172	Note the puzzling lines (the 6th and 7th) of stanza 170, and compare the rimes with stanza 187 of the <i>Court of Love</i> ; also the subject-matter of stanza 168 (5th and 6th lines) with 5th and 6th lines of stanza 184 of the <i>Court of Love</i> . Note also the word "hailsing" in stanza 166, and the word "haise" in stanza 185 of the <i>Court of Love</i> .	24: 184 to 187	

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*Note*.—It is scarcely necessary to point out that both poems are written in the seven-line stanza, known as the rime royal. The "bille" in the *Court of Love* consists of seven stanzas: in the *Kings Quair* the "bille" is referred to as "their versis sevin" = one stanza of seven lines. In the *Kings Quair* the number seven seems to play a part, e.g. in stanza 197 we read,

"I recommend my buk in lines sevin";

while the poem—deducting stanza 197, which is the *Envoi*—is made up of  $28 \times 7 = 196$  verses.



## NOTE E.

THE WOOING OF JAMES I. AND LADY JOAN  
BEAUFORT.

The romantic story of the wooing of King James the First and the Lady Joan Beaufort can be traced, like the evolution of a butterfly, through four distinct stages. In germ it is found in the ascription of the *Kingis Quair* in the Bodleian MS. (c. 1488); the second, or caterpillar stage, is reached in the *Historia Majoris Britanniae* (1521), when we are told that the poem relates to the lady Joan, and was written by James "while immured in the castle where the maiden dwelt with her mother"; the third, or dormant stage, is the period of 262 years between John Major and William Tytler; the fourth begins in 1783 and comes up to our own day, during which time the story has been abroad in the sunshine—

"A winged butterfly,  
In the wide air making its wandering flight."

Mr. William Tytler was the first writer after Major who gave to the *Kingis Quair* the importance of an historical document.<sup>1</sup> But disregarding Major's intimation that the poem was written in the Castle of Nottingham, the seat of the Beauforts—which one takes to be the meaning of the sixteenth century historian—Tytler boldly transferred the courtship to Windsor Castle, his sole authority for doing so being an entry in the *Foedera* informing us that James was detained there in the year 1413.<sup>2</sup> "Probably," he says, "it

<sup>1</sup> Bower, Boyes, Bellenden, Leslie, and Drummond refer to the marriage in quite general terms. Buchanan alone speaks of James as "being passionately enamoured of Joan, the most beautiful woman of her time," and I have already suggested that in all probability he was acquainted with the poem, and identified it as the one referred to by Major.

<sup>2</sup> Tytler wrongly cites the year when James was at Windsor as 1415 (Tytler, p. 71).

was at this period that on viewing the beautiful Jane in the garden under the castle of Windsor he first became enamoured of her."<sup>1</sup> To the editor of 1783 the poem yielded up its sense easily. Annotating stanzas 23 and 24, he fixed on "the Tower of Windsor" as the place of confinement, from which, on the auspicious day in the month of May, the prince, looking out from his window, beheld "the beautiful Jane walking below in the palace garden." In the *Governor's Guide to Windsor Castle*<sup>2</sup> the prison is now well localized, and the visitor to the most majestic of royal residences, "around which gather the memories of all ages of England's greatness," has it pointed out to him as one of the sights of the place. "Leaving the Keep garden on the left, we see facing us the first Tower of the Upper Ward—the Devil's Tower. Rising from a fourteenth century basement, where there is evidence of the presence of captives, it is most celebrated as the abode of James I. of Scotland during the whole period of his detention at Windsor. Taken in a time of peace, when on his way to pay a visit as a youth to France, he was kept at Windsor by Henry IV. and Henry V. for eighteen years, growing to manhood and learning here all manly exercises.<sup>3</sup> . . . Harshly treated he was not, yet as an exile, and debarred from filling his rightful throne, he justly considered himself wronged. His uncle, the Duke of Albany, held all power in Scotland, and was not specially anxious that his nephew should return. At last, through the exertions of Sir Duncan Campbell, Albany's son-in-law, and others of the nobles not so nearly related, and rather in despite of than with the favour of Albany, the immense ransom of £40,000 was raised and paid, and James was set free. . . .<sup>4</sup> At Windsor he must have dreamed of

<sup>1</sup> Tytler, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> By the Most Noble the Marquis of Lorne, K.T. (Cassell & Co., 1895, p. 86).

<sup>3</sup> This is quite original; no writer hitherto has gone so far as to say that James was in Windsor for eighteen years. At p. 30 we are told that James remained for "nearly twenty years" at Windsor!

<sup>4</sup> One would like to know what are the Noble Marquis's authorities for

what he might accomplish if he was set free. It was from one of the windows of the tower that he first saw Lady Joan Beaufort walking in the moated garden at the foot of the mound of the Keep. . . . Until the eighteen years were past, and Joan Beaufort, King Henry's cousin, became his queen, he lived in that tower. Then he went to dree his weird in the North. . . ."<sup>1</sup> Recent historians have given credence to the pretty legend about the Windsor courtship, and until the present time no one has been heard to doubt it. Even a writer like Dr. Hill Burton, whose scepticism made him reject much in the course of telling his country's history,—speaking of the wedding "as the very match which policy would have dictated,"—gives to the poem, as Tytler did, the importance of an historical document. "It was," he goes on to say, "a destiny uncommon among kings, to fall in love with a fair damsel casually seen: to wed her, as the one whose descent marked her to the politicians as the proper queen to bring with him to his kingdom, and finally to tell the story of his love in sweet verse worthy of a true poet."<sup>2</sup>

If, however, the *Kingis Quair* be simply a poetical composition belonging to the latter half of the fifteenth century, it will, like any poem "feigned and endited, not for any truthe of the matter to be beleued, but for disporte and passetyme onely," be entitled to no consideration whatever from the historian.

Let us examine the entries in the public registers<sup>3</sup>—the best

many of his statements. It is scarcely necessary to correct all the mis-statements in a "popular" guide book, but, as regards "the Ransom of £40,000," it is not the fact that it was paid. Not more than 9000 marks was ever paid, and in consequence the majority of the hostages, or their substitutes, remained permanently in England (*vide* Bain's *Calendar*, Vol. IV., Pref. xxxii., and authorities cited). The prominence given to Sir Duncan Campbell is not warranted by the authorities.

<sup>1</sup> Several stanzas of the *Kingis Quair* are quoted.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. of Scot.*, Vol. II., p. 397.

<sup>3</sup> I cannot be sure that I have gathered out of the registers all the entries about James: the list is, however, complete enough for the purpose of this note.

of all evidence—to ascertain if possible where James passed the eighteen years of his captivity.

August 14, 1406. To Richard Spice, lieutenant of Sir Thomas Rempston of the Tower of London, by the hands of William Darelle twice, and once by his own, for the expenses of the household of the King of Scotland and other prisoners in his keeping, 44l. 7s. 10d.—Issue Rolls (Pells) Easter, 7 Hen. IV. Bain's *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland*, Vol. IV., 723.

March 8, 1406-7. James is still confined in the Tower.—*Ib.* 727, 739).

June 10, 1407. James is removed from the Tower, and goes to Nottingham Castle under charge of Richard, Lord de Grey. He resides there and at Evesham for three or four years (*Ib.* 739, 740, 769, 777, 781, 784; Wylie, *Hist. of England under Hen. IV.*, Vol. II., c. 61; Ord. Priv. Council, I, 304). The Close Roll, 12 Hen. IV. 18, shows that on March 21, 1411, Griffith ap Owen Glendourdy and Owen ap Griffith ap Richard, James's fellow-prisoners, were removed from Nottingham Castle back to the Tower of London.

May 14, 1412. James is at Southampton "on his way to testify his good will to the king."—Bain, IV. 822; *Nat. MSS. of England*, Part I. 36.

November 30, 1412. James is at Croydon, probably residing there in the palace of Archbishop Arundel. This entry depends on the authority of the Croydon charter purporting to be written and sealed by James.

March 21, 1412-3. Henry V. ascends the throne: his first order relates to James, who is conveyed to the Tower of London.—Bain, IV. 837.

July 17, 1413. James is still in the Tower.—*Ib.* 847.

August 3, 1413. By order of the king he is delivered to the Constable of Windsor Castle (*Ib.* 850, 852, 857; *Foedera*, IX. 40, 44, 48, 60). Thereafter he goes to Pevensey, near Eastbourne (*Scotichronicon*, XV. 18; Wylie, *ib.*); and thence back to Windsor (*Excerpt Hist.* 144; Wylie, *ib.*).

October 31, 1413. James is back in the Tower of London.—Bain, IV. 852.

February 1413-4. He is still in the Tower.—*Ib.* 852.

October 20, 1414. He is still there.—*Ib.* 857.

1415. In this year James petitions Henry V. that certain Scots may come to treat for his deliverance.—*Chancery Miscell. Portfolios*, No. 11, no date. Bain, IV. 872.

December 14, 1415. James is still in the Tower, under charge of Sir John Pelham, and is spoken of as having been there since "22 February last."—*Ib.* 874.

March 18, 1415-6. He is still there.—*Ib.* 874.

November 4, 1416. He is still there, and Sir William Bouchier receives a payment on his account as "from January last."

January 30, 1416-7. James addresses letters to friends in Scotland—among others to his brother-in-law, Archibald, fourth Earl of Douglas—urging that steps be taken towards his release. The letter to Douglas is one of four dated "the penultyma day of Januier," and is written from Stratford Awe. Drafts of these letters are preserved in the Register House, Edinburgh, evidently in the handwriting of his secretary or chaplain. The handwriting is different from the Croydon Charter, *supra*.

Sir William Fraser (*The Book of Menteith*, and *The Book of Douglas*) reads Stratford Awe as equivalent to Stratford-on-Avon, but there was no castle of importance there so far as I can find. I rather incline to the opinion of Mr. Wylie in regarding it as Stratford Abbey, near London, where Henry IV. sometimes stayed during the closing years of his life (*Foed.* VIII. 694). Water Stratford, near Buckingham, has also been suggested (Wylie, *ib.*).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>There is little doubt that James was closely confined during 1417, as Henry V. was apprised of an attempt to rescue him and the Duke of Orleans, on the part of the Scots aided by French troops. The Duke, who was then at Pontefract Castle, was ordered "to be more closely confined." James, I think, was in London (*vide* Letter of Henry V., at the end of T. Livius; Speed, 637; *Foed.* IX. 568).

May 24, 1418. James is conveyed from London to Kenilworth Castle.—Bain, iv. 886.

July 1, 1418. Sir John Rotheuale, Knt. Keeper of the Wardrobe, is paid £10 for the King of Scots.—*Ib.* 886.

May 13, 1419; November 30, 1419; March 7, 1419. James is still at Kenilworth.—Bain, iv., index *voce* Kenilworth.

May 9, 1420. James is at Southampton on his way to France (Bain, iv. 898). He takes part in the siege of Melun (*ib.* 898).

September 20, 1420. James returns from France.

April 1, 1421. He is at Leicester on Ascension Day (*ib.* 908). The queen's coronation took place on February 14th at Leicester, and Henry called his Parliament to meet there on May 2. In this year negotiations begin for James's release.—*Foed. x.* 123, 125.<sup>1</sup>

December 4, 1421. James is in the Tower of London again.—Bain, iv. 911.

January 12, 1421-2. He is in Rouen.—*Ib.* 912.

February 18, 1421-2. He is still there.—*Rot. Scot.*, Vol. II. 231.

August 22, 1422. He is still in France. On August 31 Henry V. died, and James, "with a guard in close attendance on his person," accompanies the corpse to England.

October 1, 1422. A payment for James and his guard from 1st October, 1421, to 19th September, 1422, of £544 (Bain, iv. 918). On the same day Sir William Meryng, for attending on James at Rouen 210 days, gets £83 6s. 10d.

January 1422-3. James appears to have been at the Court of Westminster.—*Stevenson's Letters* (Rolls Series), Vol. I. 390.

February 17, 1422-3. Letters of safe conduct are granted to the Scots envoys to get access to the presence of James, then a prisoner in Pontefract.—*Rot. Scot.* II. 234.

<sup>1</sup>Ambassadors had often come to England previous to this year, ostensibly to negotiate for James's release, but really for the purpose of negotiating the exchange of the Earl of Fife, son of the Regent Albany, for young Percy, son of the Earl of Northumberland (*vide* Rapin, Vol. iv. 280, 281). I have not deemed it necessary to note these embassies before 1421.

February 22, 1422-3. James receives £20 for his expenses.—Bain, IV. 923.

May 12, 1423. James is still confined in Pontefract, and letters of safe conduct are granted to envoys to obtain an interview with him in the castle (*Salvus conductus pro Episcopo Glasguensi et aliis, cum rege Scotiae apud Pountfreit locuturis*). James is designated "*carissimus consanguineus noster Jacobus rex Scottorum*," and the envoys are permitted to come "*ad villam nostram de Pountfreit ad presentiam prefati consanguinei nostri*."—*Rot. Scot.* II. 236 ; Bain, IV. 927, 931.

June 2, 1423. James receives £100 for his private expenses.—*Foed. X.* 290 ; Bain, IV. 931.

June 30, 1423. The English Treasury is authorized to defray James's expenses during his absence from the King's Palace, including attendants : referring to the approaching conference at York.—*Foed. X.* 293.

July, 1423. Arrangements are made for his travelling establishment.—*Foed. X.* 296 ; *Rot. Scot.* II. 234, 236.

July 6, 1423. The English envoys receive their Letter of Instructions regarding the terms on which James might be set free. The last head of the Instructions is as follows : Lastly, they (the English envoys) might suggest, if the Scots showed themselves inclined for a matrimonial alliance, that there were "many noble ladies, nay, even ladies of the royal lineage. in England, with whom James was already well acquainted." But, the Instruction added, if the Scots should not mention marriage, it would not be desirable to use plainer language, "as English ladies are not wont, at their own instance, to offer themselves in marriage."—*Foed. X.* 295 ; Bain, IV. 929.

August 19, 1423. The Scottish Parliament nominates Commissioners to treat with the English for James's release.—Bain, IV. 932.

September 10, 1423. The terms of release are definitely arranged in the Chapter House of York : the Scots agreeing to pay £40,000 stg. in respect of James's expenses while in England, in six yearly instalments : they also approved of the matrimonial project, undertaking to send envoys to London

in October to settle the terms of the contract.—*Foed.* x. 295; *Bain*, iv. 933; *Rot. Scot.* ii. 239.

December 4, 1423. The Instrument of Release is drawn up, terms of payment of ransom adjusted, list of hostages tendered, and the drafts adjusted of obligations to be sealed by hostages, by James, and by the cities of Edinburgh, Perth, Aberdeen, and Dundee.—*Bain*, iv. 993.

January 20, 1423-4. James receives 200 marks for his wedding outfit, and a week later £24 stg. additional.—*Parl. Proceedings*, iii. 131, 133.

February 13, 1423-4. James and Joan are married in the Church of St. Overy, Southwark. The date is inferred from the fact that on 13th February an acquittance for one instalment of the ransom was given to James by way of dowry for his bride. In the *Rot. Scotiae*, ii. 246, a document recites the marriage as having taken place on 10th February, but a memo. in *Foedera* states that the warrant to seal the deed was only issued on 13th February. Sir James Ramsay (*Lancaster and York*, Vol. I.) observes that 13th February was a Sunday, that day being a favourite one for weddings. The Bishop of Winchester officiated, and the newly-wedded pair had their wedding feast at his palace.—*Foed.* x. 322; *Rot. Scot.* ii. 246; *Chron. Lond.* 112; R. Fabian, 593.

March, 1423-4. James and Joan set out for Durham.—*Ib.*

March 28, 1424. James is free *de facto*: hostages are delivered up and duly verified: bonds are sealed, and a truce for seven years from 1st May is concluded.—*Foed.* x. 324, 328, 335.

April 5, 1424. James ratifies the treaty regarding his release in terms of the condition which required that to be done across the Scottish Border, "Melros, 5th April, 1424."—*Bain*, iv. 955.

May 21, 1424. James is crowned at Scone.—*Rot. Scot.* ii. 474.

On the evidence we may now proceed to consider these three points, namely: (1) James's residence at Windsor, (2) the conjectural dates assigned by Mr. William Tytler and



Professor Skeat respectively for the composition of the *Kingis Quair*, and (3) the element of romance in the current story about the royal marriage.

§ 1. As to James having been detained a prisoner at Windsor. A cursory glance at the foregoing entries shows clearly that it does not accord with fact to say that James passed any considerable time at that royal residence. So far as the records show, he was there only once for a few weeks in the summer of 1413. The long periods during which he was imprisoned in the Tower of London, and the close guard maintained at all other times, will impress most readers.

§ 2. Mr. Tytler's suggestion that James probably first saw Joan in 1415 from his prison at Windsor Castle is disproved by the records. James in that year was a prisoner in the Tower of London. So also we may affirm with certainty that Professor Skeat's conjecture about the poem having been written at Windsor in May or June, 1423, is a pure figment. James, during the spring and summer of that year, was in close confinement within the royal castle of Pontefract, busy-ing himself, as was natural, in arranging for the coming of the envoys who were to settle the terms on which he might regain his liberty.

§ 3. The element of romance in the accepted story of the royal marriage must disappear when we find that the *Kingis Quair* is not available to the historian, and also that there is not the slightest evidence to warrant Windsor Castle being selected as the place where the courtship took place.

It is observable that nowhere is there in any record a hint about the Lady Joan Beaufort being the fiancée of James until after 10th September, 1423, when the terms of his release were definitely arranged. From the Letter of Instruction, of date 6th July, 1423, it is plain that a matrimonial alliance was much desired on the part of the English. The proposal was no doubt, in the first instance, to come from the side of the Scots, but if it was made, then the English Commissioners were to mention that there were "many noble ladies, even ladies of the royal lineage, with whom James

was already well acquainted." The tenor of that letter certainly leads one to infer that on 6th July James was heart-whole, and that until after 10th September he could not have been betrothed to Joan. There is besides a decidedly honest and straightforward ring in the concluding sentence of the letter, which seems quite to negative the idea of a preconcerted scheme on the part of the Regent and the royal family to bring about the marriage of Lady Joan, to the exclusion of any other noble or royal lady whom James might prefer. Whether the English Commissioners, without violating either the letter or the spirit of their instructions, hinted at the desirability of an alliance in the interests of both nations, or whether the proposal truly emanated in the first instance from the Scots, can only be conjecture now; but once the matrimonial project was approved, it is natural to suppose that the Beauforts would be very desirous that the alliance should be with a lady of their own family. James, we may believe, was already well acquainted with Joan; and there is not the slightest justification for suggesting merely a *mariage de convenance*; all the same, when the facts are examined, we can see that there is no authority whatever for the rose-coloured story derived from the *Kingis Quair*, and told by so many modern historians on the faith of the editors of that poem. Future editors may better accept the Aristotelian canon, that it is the poet's function to relate, not what has happened, but what may happen; and that poetry is of higher worth than history.

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